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—Joe "Hosstail" Small

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Vol. 1, No. 6 — MARCH, 1924

THIS NUMBER CONTAINS:

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The Gospel Wesf of the Pecos . . . . . Page 4
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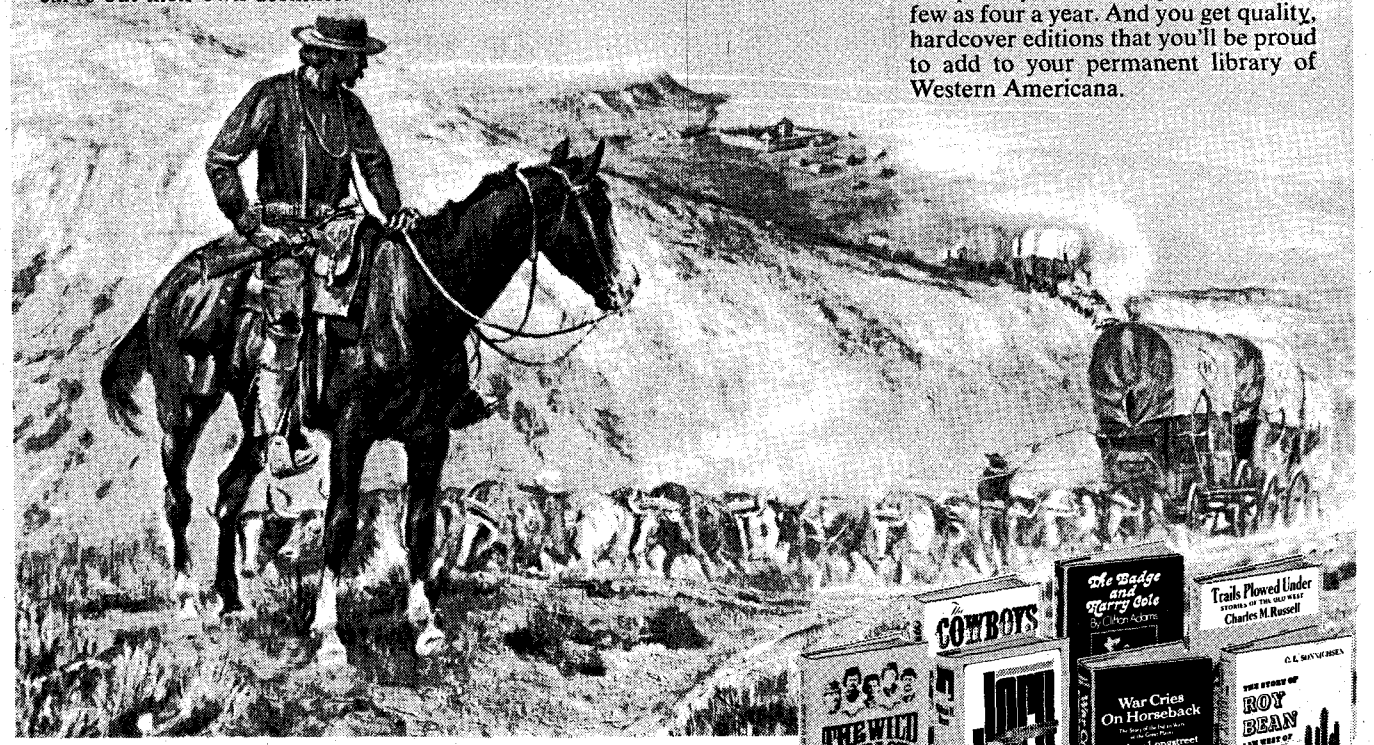

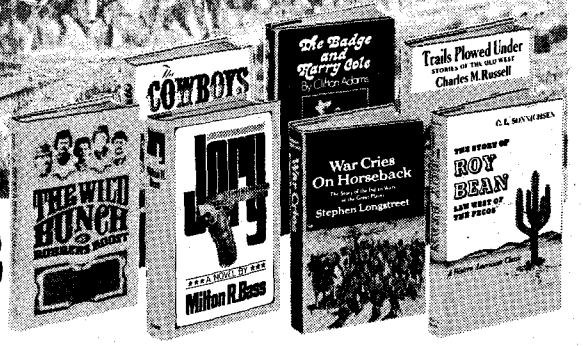

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A JOE SMALL PUBLICATION

March-April, 1973
Volume 20, No. 4
Whole No. 116

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of The Real West

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"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."— Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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Cover
"5 A.M." by Joe Rader Roberts
Courtesy Rue de Lamar Gallery, Austin, Texas

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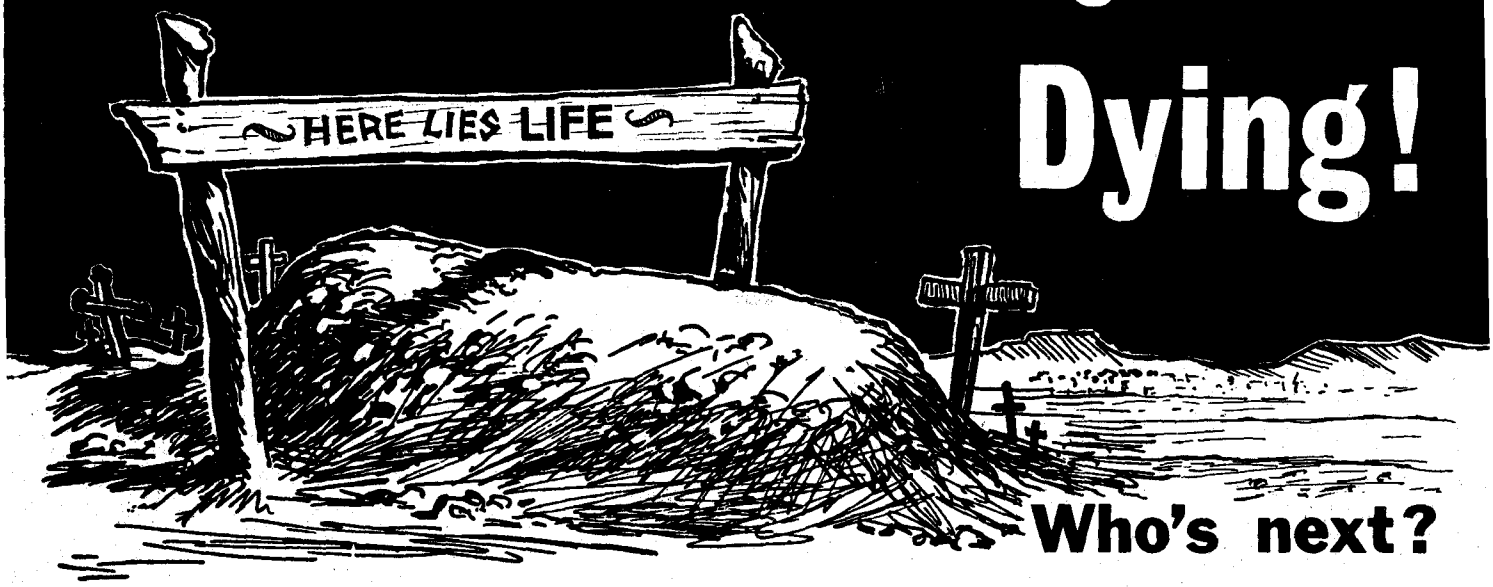
No Wonder They Are Dying!



Who's next?

I cut my teeth on *Liberty, Collier's, American Magazine,* and *The Saturday Evening Post.* I loved the earthworm tractor series by William Hazlett Upson, the grass roots humor of George Sessions Perry and those unmatchable *Post* cover drawings by Norman Rockwell.

Then came a new type of journalism, pioneered by *Life. Look* followed and was first to die. *Life*'s demise was only a matter of time.

Why did these great American institutions fail? *Look* and *Life* mentioned the tremendous competition of TV and the approximately 160% raise in postal rates. It is interesting to note that advertising budgets for television continue to rise. One of the biggest agencies revealed that its clients spent 79% of their total advertising budget on television. That leaves 21% for consumer (public) magazines, newspapers, radio, trade papers and billboard advertising! It is easy to see what a small amount of revenue would trickle down to the general interest magazine—one that is supported by the public as a whole.

Personally, I think this is unfortunate because there have been no conclusive figures relative to the effectiveness of the printed color advertisement compared with a short ad on TV that is gone in a moment and must be repeated many times to really become effective. Nevertheless, after a long day at the office, doing paperwork, it seems that the American public is tired of print—they want to lie down on a couch or sit in a comfortable chair and look at television. This is fine for most people. They even suffer through the offending commercials so long as the program continues. In a magazine, they have one advantage—they can skip over the printed advertisement if they don't like it! I am not talking down TV or any other type of entertainment or educational media for our country. I am just sorry to see the last of our giant weeklies die because of TV, unreasonable postage rises, paper costs, typesetting costs, printing, wages, rent—everything rising. That is true of business as a whole but it seems that most companies can merely raise prices on their products and get by.

FOR a long time we have been drifting toward the day of specialized magazines. I think it is here now. For instance, if you are a bike enthusiast, you can't learn all about motorcycles by watching TV. But you can subscribe for a half-dozen "wheel" magazines. If you are a lover of horses, you can see them in TV Westerns, but you don't get enough of the real story, the part horses play in our present life. There are over fifty horse magazines in which you *can* get this information. I could go on for dozens of different categories—for instance, there are three magazines on barbed wire alone!

We are going to miss the mass circulated weeklies and monthlies that have died. They carried dramatic pictures of a changing world, well done, on-the-spot stories of historic events as they happened. Where are we going to get our exposés, our informational articles, our human interest features—what will take the place of these great magazines? TV to an extent, newspapers, and we have other magazines that will give us certain aspects that these giants of the past covered—but it won't be the same.

It seems like everybody is hitting the magazine business at the same time. Let's liken it to a rancher who has a good spread, good range, sufficient help, and a fine family. Then things start happening. A prolonged drouth turns grass to dust. A grasshopper plague leaves even his irrigated grain fields and truck patches bare. An outbreak of blackleg is dropping his cattle like flies. Inflation isn't helping by bringing on higher wages, more taxes—his costs are rising and his profits are going down. Finally his hired hands quit. And so does his family. It's a pretty lonesome feeling. . . .

The general public knows less about publishing than most any other type business. Let's just take one "for instance." I think people would be interested in knowing what caused the demise of their favorite magazine, or magazines, but no publisher to my knowledge, has ever gone into the details with his readers. Maybe I am the only idiot in the business! I have let our readers in on difficulties, triumphs—the whole picture from the very first.

Readers who have been with us for twenty years will remember my early scribblings. Jokingly they kidded me and called them "crying editorials" and in a way, I suppose they were, even though I was merely making a "state-of-the-Union" summation of *exactly* what was happening to us—why, how and which. By golly, they flat jumped out of the old wagon, bowed their backs, and pushed us on uphill. I wonder, for instance, if *Look* and *Life* had told their old standby readers just what was happening—would it have done any good?

I'll get back to that "for instance" thing and quote merely one aggravation that publishers are facing today. There is a thing called Retail Display Allowance that I don't think one reader in ten million would know about. It is a little gimmick wherein certain chain stores charge 10% of the cover price merely to handle your magazine. This is over and above their regular profit on per copy sales of magazines. On a 50¢ magazine, for instance, the publisher is paying 5¢ per copy sold for the privilege of his maga-

(Continued on page 64)

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Truly Western

Postscript to a Photo

On page 28 of the February 1972 TRUE WEST is a story by F. C. Marquiss as told to Lee M. Wells. Mr. Marquiss is the last living member of my father's family. One of the pictures in the article, on page 30, is of the family and the sod house in Nebraska where I was born. By the time I came along, about a dozen years later than events mentioned in the story, the dim trail shown was a good graded road, as were nearly all roads at that time.

The small trees at the back of the house were tall shade trees and the ones just visible at the right corner had grown into an apple orchard. Most of those trees do not show up in this picture.

The windmill is the same as then and my mother's garden was where the hay wagons are parked in the picture. The barn was the same when I knew the old place. The yard was neatly fenced and well planted with trees and flowers.

I think the picture of the sod schoolhouse was of the first school I attended in 1903 when I was four years old. In those days children started to school when they were five years old in September or would be five years old before Christmas. I was five years old in November.

That Christmas the snow was deep, so Grandfather Marquiss hitched up the ox team, Old Buck & Baldy, and we went to the program in a big bob sleigh with hot bricks to keep our feet warm. The bricks were wrapped in brown paper and laid on the quilt, which was placed on the straw in the bottom of the sleigh box. Grandfather never let anyone else drive or even hitch Buck & Baldy up to anything. They were old and he was careful of them.—Mrs. Gladys Marquiss Wright, Gillette, Wyoming 82716

Haunstine Tragedy

I read the story "Twice Punished: Was It Deserved?" in the February 1972 issue. I was very much interested in the story for I have heard and read a little about it before. In the spring of 1885 my mother moved with her parents and two younger brothers (the H. C. West family) onto a homestead at the north end of Roten Valley. Their homestead was several miles north of the Hiram Roten and William Ashley homesteads.

The town of Callaway hadn't gotten started yet at that time so my grandparents did their trading at Cozad, Nebraska. The road they traveled to get to Cozad led right past the Roten and Ashley homesteads; also the schoolhouse where the clock and lumber were stolen. My grandparents' homestead is about twenty-seven miles northwest of Cozad.

Sometime after Hiram Roten and William Ashley were murdered, the schoolhouse from which the clock and lumber were stolen was vacated and another sod schoolhouse was built nearly two miles south of the old one.

My grandfather was a schoolteacher and my grandmother told me he taught two school terms in the Roten and Ashley district. At last one term was taught in the southern schoolhouse. More than likely some of the pupils my grandfather taught had previously been taught by Albert E. Haunstine. My grandfather taught the Arnold, Nebraska school during the winter of 1894-95.—Wesley Curlile, Johnstown, Nebraska 69214

Artist in Northern Ireland

I would like to apologize to all of your readers who may have responded to my letter in your June 1971 TRUE WEST and had their answers returned stamped "Return to Sender," and I would appreciate your running this by way of explanation.

Little Ship Street does not exist anymore—it has been demolished to make way for a new motor way. I have been living at my present address in Shore Crescent since January 1971, but obviously our Central Post Office has overlooked this fact and returns any mail intended for me back to the original senders. Also, I was injured in a bomb explosion in October 1971 and have just recently been discharged from the hospital.

I still would like to hear from anyone who is interested in Western art, mainly the Plains Indians (their style of dress is so diverse), and anything pertaining to them. I would be willing to exchange samples of original art work in pen and ink, etc. I use the old-time photographs as a reference for my painting.

FRONTIER TIMES and TRUE WEST have disappeared from the newsstands here since 1967. I have come across many magazines of this kind, but never any that come near the quality of your publications. They certainly are "First in

(Continued on page 66)

The Marquiss family on their homestead in 1891. The trail visible is the main road between South Loup and Broken Bow, Nebraska.

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Hungry and bone weary, Boone Helm and five others made their way

BOONE HELM—

BOONE HELM, in the words of Montana Vigilante Thomas Dimsdale, was a "savage and defiant marauder" and "a wild and reckless character." Another Montana Vigilante, Nathaniel P. Langford, called him "one of those hideous monsters of depravity whom neither precept nor example could have saved from a life of crime." A pioneer named Andrew Jackson Splawn, who met Helm three years before his hanging, wrote: "His was the most revolting face a man ever had, the look in his eyes was indescribable—something like that of a fiery vulture." Dimsdale described him in 1864 as "a man of medium size, and about forty years old; hard-featured, and not intelligent looking."

This man who struck terror into those who knew him, was born in Kentucky sometime in the 1820s. One source gives 1822 as the year of his birth. Another says about 1828. He was still a small boy when his parents took him to Log Branch, Monroe County, Missouri. The Helm family consisted of five sons, Boone and four older boys, and perhaps other children, though no contemporary record of them has survived. Boone grew into a wild and unruly young man, a drinker and a brawler, but perhaps little different from many other youngsters of his generation living in an area not very far from the largely unexplored and primitive Great American Desert, as the plains region was called.

"The rough pursuits of border-life were congenial to his tastes," wrote Langford, who investigated Helm's early life. "He excelled in feats of physical strength, and delighted in nothing more than a quarrel which brought his prowess into full display. He was an inordinate drinker, and when excited by liquor gave way to all the evil passions of his nature. One of the exploits recorded of him was that of hurling his bowie-knife into the ground from horseback and regaining it at full speed. On one occasion, while the circuit court was in session, the Sheriff attempted to arrest him. Helm resisted the officer, but urging his horse up the stairs into the courtroom, astonished the judge by de-

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from Dalles City, Oregon toward Camp Floyd, Utah Territory.

- MAN EATER!

Helm's blood-lust was hard to satisfy—which may have been his greatest frustration. For no matter how many men he killed or maimed (or ate) he was unable to completely depopulate the West!

By COLIN RICKARDS

Photos Courtesy Author

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

manding with profane emphasis what he wanted with him."

Boone Helm was fond of his bowie knife, a fearsome weapon carried by most frontiersmen and favored by many over and above the cap and ball handguns of the day, which were difficult and clumsy in close personal combat. Time and again Boone's long-bladed knife figured in his wild and bloody adventures.

He married in 1848 and was soon the father of a baby girl, but he liked to beat his wife and continued his heavy drinking. He barely supported his family. Eventually his wife, despairing of his changing, and perhaps concerned for her own personal safety and for the life of their baby, divorced him. The grounds, said Nathaniel Langford, were "ill-treatment" and "his vicious and profligate habits."

It is doubtful whether the parting broke Boone Helm's heart. Almost at once he decided to leave Log Branch for other fields. His four brothers were on the West Coast; had gone there, it is suspected, in the wake of the California gold rush. Boone, on the other hand, was more interested in Texas, where the wild Comanches and their allies, the Kiowas, contested traditional hunting grounds with the Texas newcomers. Helm went to the town of Paris, Missouri where he met a man named Littlebury Shoot who was also thinking of going to Texas. One night, while they were drinking hard, Shoot agreed to travel south with Helm. Shoot may only have told Helm they would go together in order to pacify him; certainly he subsequently had second thoughts about either the trip or his proposed companion, or both.

One evening about nine o'clock, on September 14, 1851, Boone Helm rode up to the Shoot home in Paris, woke Shoot from his bed and demanded to know if he were serious about the venture. Shoot attempted to explain, but Boone Helm wanted a simple answer of yes or no. Shoot told him that the answer was no.

"At the utterance of this reply," Nathaniel Langford recorded, "Helm buried his bowie-knife in the breast of the unfortunate man."

Shoot collapsed to the ground calling for his wife. Boone Helm swung into the saddle and rode off into the night.

WILLIAM SHOOT of Hannibal, brother of the deceased, was notified of the murder and immediately set out after Helm. The killer had a start of more than forty miles, but Shoot pushed his horse hard and pursuer and pursued crossed Grand Prairie together, the distance between them narrowing all the time. Shoot, however, guessed wrongly that Helm would head for Roachport. Instead, the fugitive went to Booneville. Shoot, finding that he had lost the trail, sent telegrams containing Helm's description all over the area and then returned to Paris for his brother's funeral.

Apparently William Shoot was a man of some substance. He bought two good horses and hired Joel Moppen and Samuel Querry to continue tracking his brother's murderer and stay with it until they caught up with him. The two men also must have been authorized to hire additional help if necessary. They picked up Helm's trail at Booneville and followed

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it deep into the Indian Territory, a haven even then for hardcases. They employed an Indian trailer to help them and, when they found their man, took along a deputy sheriff to make the actual arrest. Helm reached for his trusty bowie knife, but thought better of it when he found himself staring down the barrel of the lawman's gun.

At his first court appearance Helm contrived to get the trial postponed. He then obtained a change of venue and when the case was called, the State had to ask for further postponement because important witnesses were not present. When finally the case was called there was no question of an acquittal, and Boone Helm had not expected one. He had gambled on convincing the judge that he was mad. In this he was successful. He was found guilty of the murder of Littlebury Shoot, but insane.

"After his conviction, under the advice of physicians, he was consigned to the lunatic asylum, his conduct meantime being that of a quiet, inoffensive lunatic," wrote Nathaniel Langford. "His keeper, finding him harmless, indulged him so far as to accompany him on daily walks into the country surrounding the institution. On one occasion, on some urgent pretense, Helm asked permission to enter a willow copse, which was readily granted. Afterward his desire to enter the copse whenever he approached it seemed to take the form of a mania. Suspecting no ulterior design, his keeper indulged him. One day, meeting a friend near the spot, the keeper, during Helm's absence, engaged in conversation. Time passed unnoticed at first, but as the stay of Helm was prolonged, the keeper, fearing some incident had befallen him, made a rapid search through the thicket. But the bird had flown. His stratagem was successful. He was never afterward seen in Missouri."

Boone Helm headed for California and soon joined up with his four brothers. Those who knew him there remembered that he passed under the name of James and not Boone, presumably as a disguise. The brothers first had had mining claims near Placerville, known as Hangtown, and then located in Canyon Creek near Georgetown, in El Dorado County. There they were known as tough individuals, not to be trifled with lightly.

"Almost my first acquaintance on my arrival was the Helm boys, five brothers," recalled W. L. Manley, who took up a neighboring mining claim on Canyon Creek. "Their names were James (who had killed his man in Missouri), Daunt, Chat, Devenport and Wade. They were thoroughbred backwoods Missourians, and were very proud of their State, and as rough a set of men as ever crossed the plains. They gambled and worked twenty-four hours in each day. A man by the name of Bush kept a saloon which was made of brush, where he kept a keg of whiskey and a few decks of cards, and on a puncheon table these men, with others, played poker ten hours every night. Their only apparel consisted of a pair of overalls and check shirt. No roof over them, no fire, and the only light a tallow candle. Here they were happy."

Littlebury Shoot discovered that there were no "little" disagreements with Boone Helm.

Manley's first contact with the Helm brothers was in the form of a challenge by them to a shooting match. Being an excellent shot, he bested them several times at target competition. They became quite friendly, and he concluded that they had been testing him. Having found him to be a marksman of some ability, they decided to leave him alone.

The brothers were constantly in minor squabbles, including one with their Alabama-born partner, a man named Holman, which nearly ended in gunplay and which was caused by their jealousy over another—successful—claim individually owned by the partner.

In another incident, involving a "kangeroo court"-style trial of a miner accused of stealing a poke of gold from a friend, Boone Helm partially hanged the man from an oak tree to extract a confession.

A few weeks later all the brothers took part in a lynching. "A hard-working wife had been murdered by a drunken husband because she refused to give him the gold dust she had earned at washing to enable him to continue his spree," W. L. Manley reported. The Helm boys were involved in his lynching.

"[They] were always leaders in such cases where summary punishment was dealt out," Manley said. "They boasted of what they did, and defended their course upon the ground that it was right to hang such offenders. They were proud of the part they took, had no fear of apprehension and no hope of reward."

Considering that both Boone and Wade Helm would one day meet their own ends at the hands of Vigilantes, it is perhaps fitting that they should have gained some experience as givers as well as receivers.

Manley subsequently gave up his diggings on Canyon Creek and moved away. In 1854 he met Devenport Helm in Coyote. The man was on the run from a posse following a killing. He got away that time, but Manley heard later that he had been involved in another gunfight in Sonora County and that his adversary, who had not been the aggressor, had emptied a double-barrelled shotgun into Helm at close range. In due course Wade Helm killed a man in Georgetown during a gambling dispute and fled. He was sub-

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sequently caught and lynched in San Bernardino County. Either Chat or Daunt Helm—it is not clear which—was also known as "Tex" and headed north to the goldfields of Idaho Territory. The other brother was still alive as late as 1894, sole survivor of the family, married to an Indian woman and living on the edge of the Nevada desert country.

"James" Helm, reverting to his given name of Boone, drifted around the California diggings in search of easy money for a while. Crime was rife in every city, every town and every small hamlet where men panned for gold or gained it over card tables or at the point of a gun, but exactly what Boone Helm did during the next four years, and precisely where he went, in not recorded.

If he became involved in crime in San Francisco, it is likely he fled during the Vigilante clean-up in the early 1850s. Thomas Dimsdale and Nathaniel Langford both knew Helm in Montana, and many men who had been hopeful gold prospectors in California subsequently drifted up to the Alder Gulch strikes. Some of them must have been the sources for statements that Helm had been active in the criminal activities of the California goldfields.

Dimsdale reported that upon reaching California the young murderer "joined himself to the confraternity of iniquity that then ruled that country." During his time there, said Dimsdale, "he either killed or assisted at the killing of nearly a dozen men in the brawls so common at that time in the Western country." Helm himself later admitted having murdered one man in California and there were probably others.

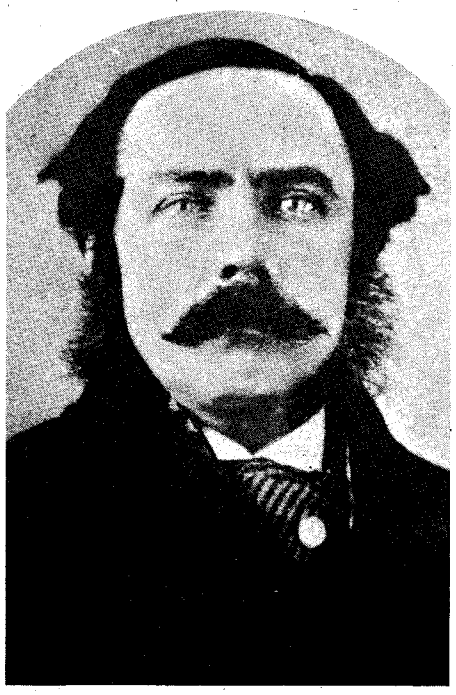
Langford, writing of Helm's California days, said that "several persons were killed by him while there, in personal recontre." Here Langford refers to the Western custom that a killing in self-defense—or "personal recontre" as he termed it—was merely a "killing," not a murder. On this basis, if the dead man was proved to have been the aggressor the killer usually went free.

"At length," Langford reported, "he committed actual murder, but escaped arrest by flight."

BOONE HELM rode into The Dalles, Oregon in the spring of 1858, conscious that it was more than likely that an extradition order would be obtained by California authorities once his whereabouts became known. It was essential that he keep moving. He soon fell in with a group of men who were planning an overland journey to Camp Floyd, Utah, some sixty miles southwest of Salt Lake City, traveling via Fort Hall. To Boone Helm it seemed an ideal trip to throw California authorities off his trail if they had tracked him as far as The Dalles.

The party included Dr. William H. Groves, Elijah Burton, William Fletcher, John Martin, a man named Field and another called McGranigan. The party left The Dalles and a few days later reached Grand Ronde River. Boone Helm had by this time weighed up his companions. Dr. Groves, he had decided, would not allow himself to be involved in any illegal scheme. McGranigan, on the other hand, seemed to be a kindred spirit. He was still undecided about the others.

Nathaniel Langford reports that Helm suggested they enlist the help of the Snake Indians in a raid against the 4,000-strong horse herd belonging to the Walla Walla tribe, run off the stock, divide it with their Snake allies and take their own share to Salt Lake City for sale. Helm was in a boastful mood and, if Nathaniel Langford is to be believed (he may have had his information direct from Dr. Groves), talked freely of his past killings—and worse.



From the files of the Montana Historical Society

Thomas Dimsdale wrote down observations and information he had learned about Boone Helm, as well as other "undesirables."

"Many's the poor devil I've killed, at one time or another—and the time has been when I've been obliged to feed on some of them," Langford quotes Helm as saying.

"Groves, who had heard enough to satisfy him that a longer stay with this company would be accompanied by risks for which he had neither inclination nor fitness, mounted his horse at a late hour that night, and spurred back to The Dalles as rapidly as possible," wrote Langford. "On his arrival he sent intelligence to the chief of the Walla Wallas of Helm's contemplated foray, warning them to keep a careful watch upon their horses." The raid was not made, either because Helm and his companions guessed what Groves would do when he reached The Dalles, or because the Indians took steps to guard their animals.

The party remained out in the country for the summer—Helm himself having no inclination to be around towns where he might be recognized—and in the autumn the six men set off again for Camp Floyd. They left Grand Ronde River late in October, when snow already had begun to block the mountain passes. All game had moved out and the thermometer dropped to thirty or forty degrees below zero in the high mountains. Why they waited so long before attempting the journey is a mystery, the answer to which will never be known here. Boone Helm was the sole survivor of the party and his version is therefore the only one available.

THE whole incredible story was set down by John W. Powell in a long detailed letter to Nathaniel Langford.

"Dear sir:

"On the 10th of April, 1859, I was on my way from Fort Owen, Bitter Root Valley, to Salt Lake City. My party consisted of one American named James Misinger, a Frenchman called 'Grand Maison', a French half-breed named Antoine, and three Indians.

"I had crossed the Snake river just above Fort Hall, pitched my lodge, and was entering to indulge in a brief sleep, when I heard some one outside ask in a loud tone of voice, 'Who owns this shebang?' Stepping to the door and looking out, I saw a tall, cadaverous, sunken-eyed man standing over me, dressed in a dirty dilapidated coat and shirt and drawers, and moccasins so worn that they could scarcely be tied to his feet. Having invited him in and inquired his business, he told me substantially the following:

"His name was Boone Helm. In company with five others he had left Dalles City, Oregon, in October, 1858, intending to go to Camp Floyd, Utah Territory. Having reached the Raft river, they were attacked by a party of Digger Indians, with whom they maintained a running fight for several miles, but none of the party was killed or severely wounded. Late in the evening they reached the Bannack river, where they camped, picketed their horses near by, and stationed two sentinels. During the night one of the sentinels was killed, the savage who committed the deed escaping on a horse belonging to the party.

"Upon consultation, it was decided that they had better leave that place as soon as possible. The sky at the time was overcast with storm-clouds, and soon after they got into their saddles the weather culminated in a snow-storm, which increased in violence until it became terrific. Finally, being unable to see anything but sheets of snow, they became bewildered, and knew not in what direction they were proceeding. Morning brought no relief. In the midst of an ocean of snow, they were as oblivious of locality in daylight as if total darkness had encompassed them. They knew they were somewhere between Ross's Fork and the Bear river, and this was their most definite knowledge.

"At last they reached Soda Springs on Bear river, where familiar landmarks came in view. They then travelled up that river until they reached Thomas's fork, where they were forced to stop, from the lean and exhausted condition of their horses and the depth of the snow. Here they found a very comfortable

(Continued on page 18)

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ARIZONA'S "LOST CABIN" MINES

The San Francisco Mountains as seen from the northeast, looking across Dead Man's Flat. In and around these mountains are a dozen lost mine cabins about which very little is known.

A landmark that can cave in, burn, be blasted, or completely covered by undergrowth wouldn't seem to be a prospector's favorite clue—but it is, and almost every state has one . . .

By MAURICE KILDARE

Photos Courtesy Author

WHEN the scream of a cougar, mingled with the shrill and painful cry of a fatally wounded horse, echoed over Locket Meadow, the two men in the wagon camp leaped to their feet, guns in hand. But they reached the two big Percherons out in the flat by the springs too late. The cougar had disappeared into the thick aspens leaving one horse dying on the ground. Blood pumped through deep gashes in its neck, and it was shot to end its suffering.

The next day (August 1888) one of the men walked out five miles to a ranch in Black Bill Park. He tried to buy a big horse to get the heavily loaded wagon out of the meadow to town, but the rancher preferred lending him one instead.

These two men, complete strangers in the country, drove their wagon to town, heavily loaded with some kind of sacked mineral and some meager camp gear on top. They shipped to California whatever valuables the sacks contained. While they were waiting for the return on it, the wagon and remaining horse were sold.

The Flagstaff city water department's summer camp inside the great crater that formed the San Francisco Mountains. The log section of the building was built before 1878 by miners who may have worked a mine.

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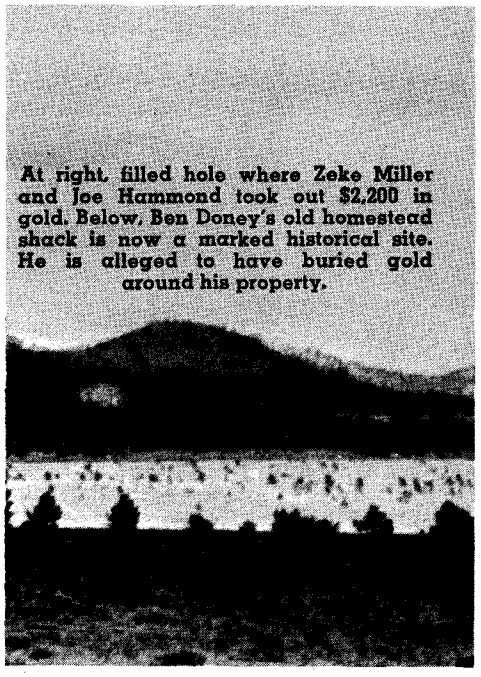


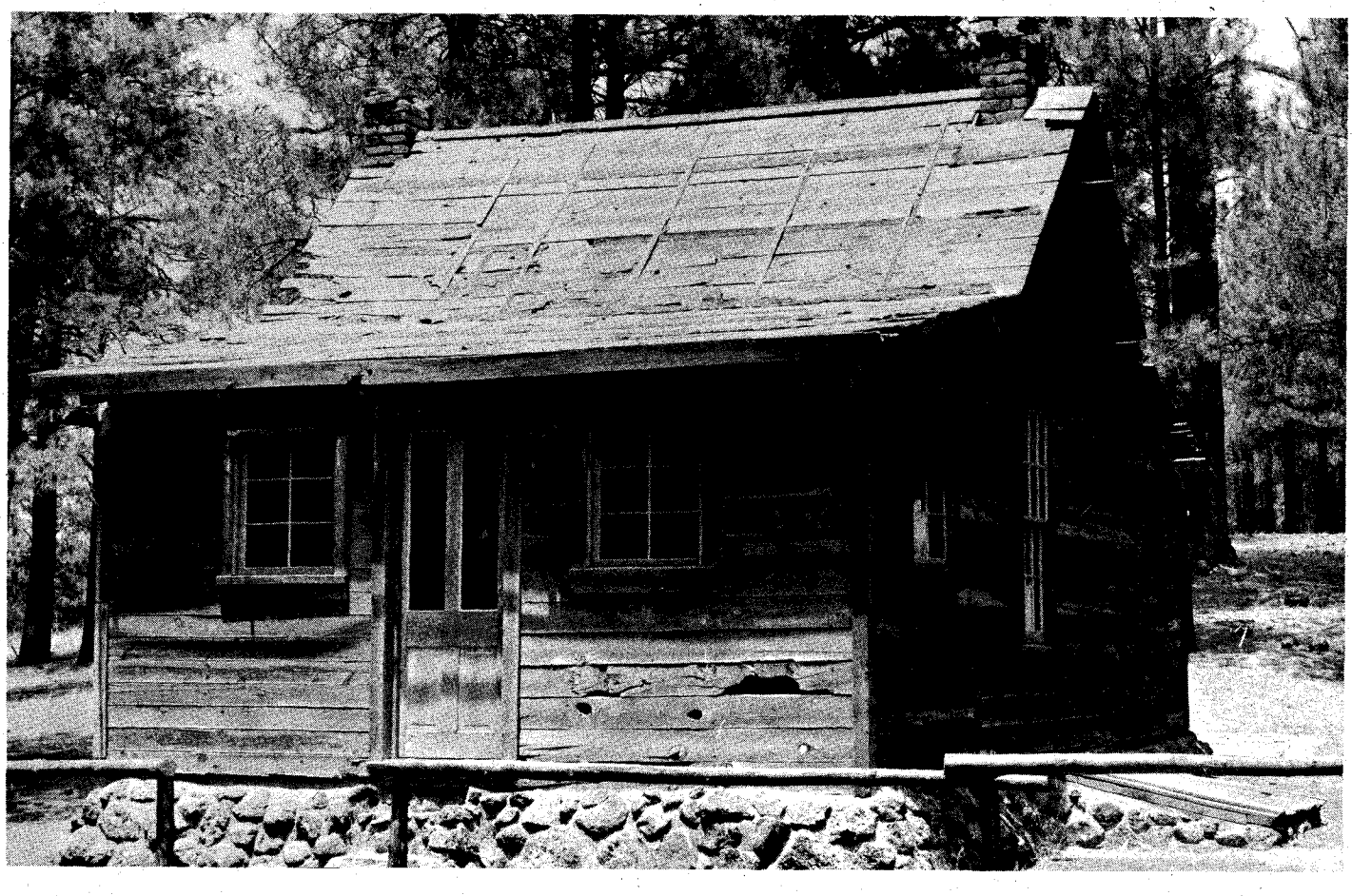
At right, filled hole where Zeke Miller and Joe Hammond took out $2,200 in gold. Below, Ben Doney's old homestead shack is now a marked historical site. He is alleged to have buried gold around his property.

The two burly, close-mouthed men proved a surprise to the scattered population. Their presence in the area had not been known, much less that they were mining high on the San Francisco Mountain peaks. There was nothing on the check when it was cashed at Tom Pollock's private bank to show what the payment covered; however, whatever it was must have been rich for the check was for $3,800. Pollock reported this after the strangers left Flagstaff by train for Albuquerque, New Mexico.

In reply to his comment that they had obviously been working a valuable mine, " 'Tain't no secret," one informed him. "It's up in the inner basin of the peaks. You can't miss finding it. We built a one-room cabin beside the shaft we put down to the ore. The vein is near worked out, or so we figure."

A gold or silver mine on the mountain? Knowledgeable men declared that to be impossible. Its high, sharp peaks ring a huge volcanic crater, which centuries ago spewed lava and cinders over most of north-central Arizona. There couldn't be any valuable minerals in this burned-out furnace.

As for the nameless strangers, their tracks were followed into Locket Meadow where their team and wagon had been kept. Ground evidence showed that



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Above, Wilbur Wolfington had been to the old cabin many times, but he and Charley Halliday couldn't find the spot again. Below, Charley Halliday gave his mother some pretty interesting rocks for her aquarium.

the big horses were used to pack something off the mountain where the wagon could not be taken. Their hoofprints and the shoe marks of the men led up into the old crater, then disappeared on the west slopes near timberline. Tall tales were told about the "lost cabin mine" men didn't believe existed.

Yet in the 1890s the city developed snow-fed springs of the inner basin for domestic water; and some years later Water Department Superintendent Jim Beard, while searching for other springs to incorporate into the system, came onto a rotting log cabin on the western slope. Surprised, he started toward it amid the tangle of brush and vines in the timber —and fell into an open shaft six feet in diameter. Fortunately for him the hole had caved in around the pole ladder used by the miners. He landed some ten feet below but climbed out with only a few bruises.

Searching around he found a pile of charcoal and a slag heap. Near it lay one wooden side of a giant handmade bellows used to melt down whatever was recovered. Next, he located the mine dump and took samples from it. These proved to contain a small amount of silver and lead, neither in sufficient quantity to be worked profitably.

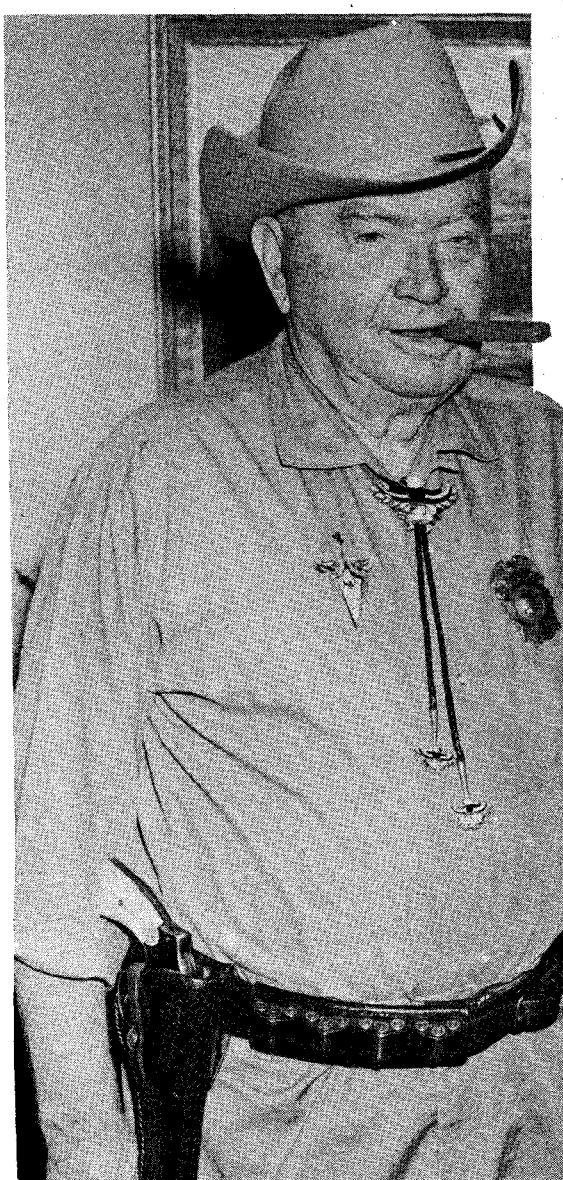
After he told his story several men entered the inner basin trying to locate the shaft. Deep snow came early that year and Beard was unable to guide them into the mountains until the following summer. When he did, he couldn't find the old cabin or the shaft.

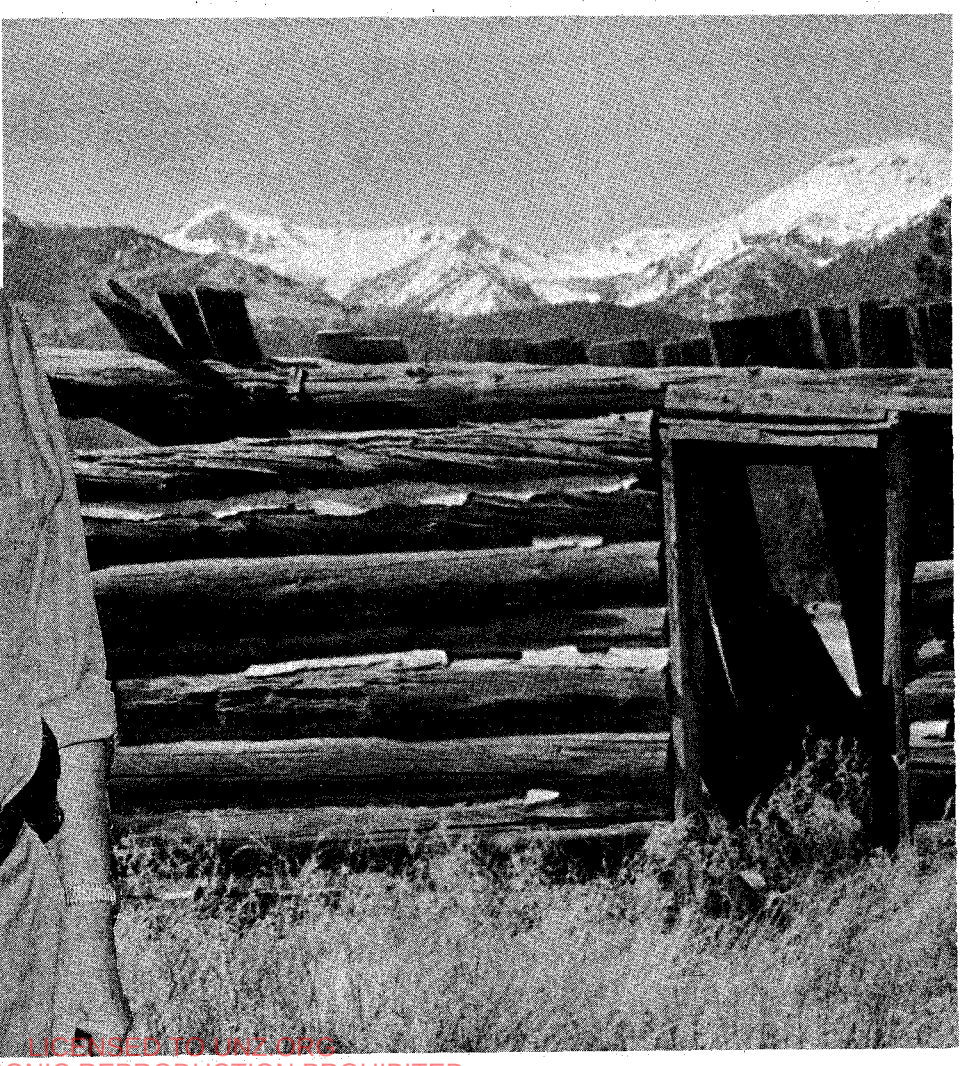
So came into being the unexplainable mine that shouldn't be. And it happens to be only one of a dozen mysterious lost mine cabins on and around San Francisco Peaks, the highest mountains in Arizona.

EVERY western state boasts of at least one lost cabin mine. Montana swears by two—one on Willow Creek in the extreme northwest corner, and another in the Big Horn Mountains. California has several throughout the Mother Lode country. Colorado has one somewhere at the base of Pikes Peak and another of note in the Medicine Bow Range. On Idaho's Snake River there is one near the great lava beds. But Arizona owns at least a dozen scattered around the San Francisco Peaks alone.

The second cabin of "lost mine" importance was built in the cedars north of the mountain by the Civil War veteran and old prospector, Ben Doney. There he worked a mine, a known fact, but he could not be followed to it. When questioned he refused to give out any information. After two or three years he shifted his endless digging farther north to what became known as Doney Crater

Below, this rotting log cabin within sight of the snow-clad San Francisco Peaks, and the filled mine shaft from which came platinum and gold ore, have not been found since this photo was taken in 1930.





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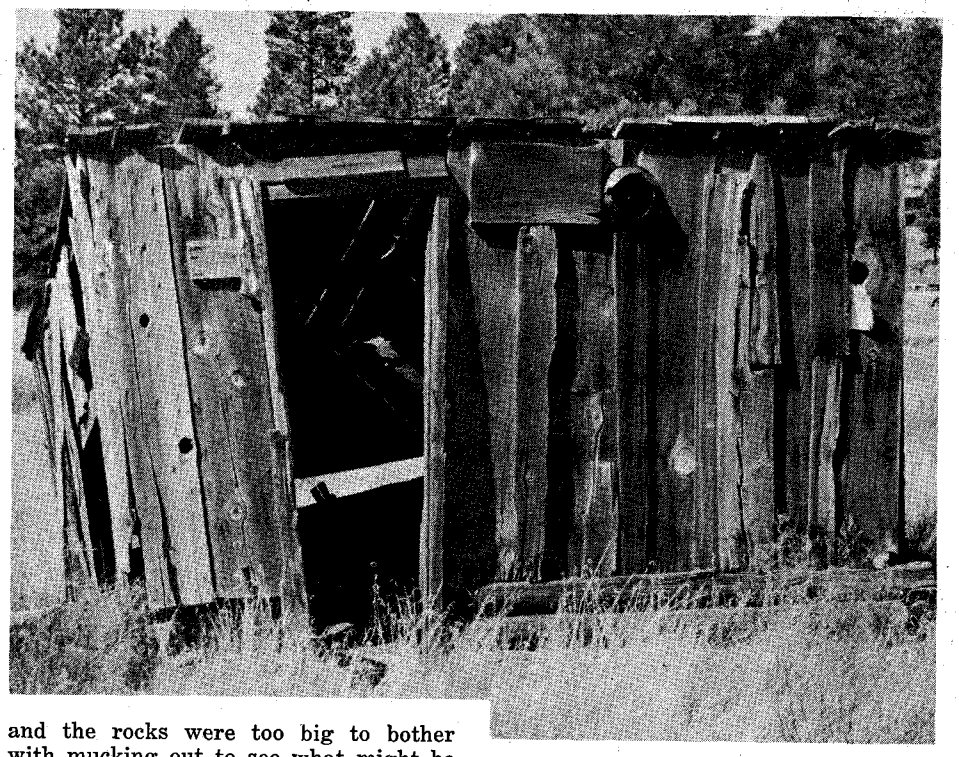
on the Little Colorado River, now in Wupatki National Monument.

About 1898 his cabin was found. Most of the cedar timbers of the walls were gone. It stood next to a great crack in the earth which was to be called Doney Fissure. Over this crack he put in a log windlass. By ladders strung from shelf to shelf—created when the earth pulled apart in a mighty upheaval—he entered the depths. Somewhere below he loaded a bucket and, climbing out, hauled it to the top. It was strictly a one-man operation.

Doney had staked a claim. His faded notices when found titled it "The Lost Mines of the Padres," obviously an old man's dream based on the purely legendary Spanish mines of the 16th century.

Doney hauled some kind of ore to a shack on his homestead in Black Bill Park where it was ground up and panned. Probably the recovery was gold for he occasionally turned in some when buying supplies, but it couldn't have been a great amount. Yet stories persist that he buried considerable yellow metal around his home. Several men, especially neighboring farmers, searched diligently for Doney's supposed wealth after he died.

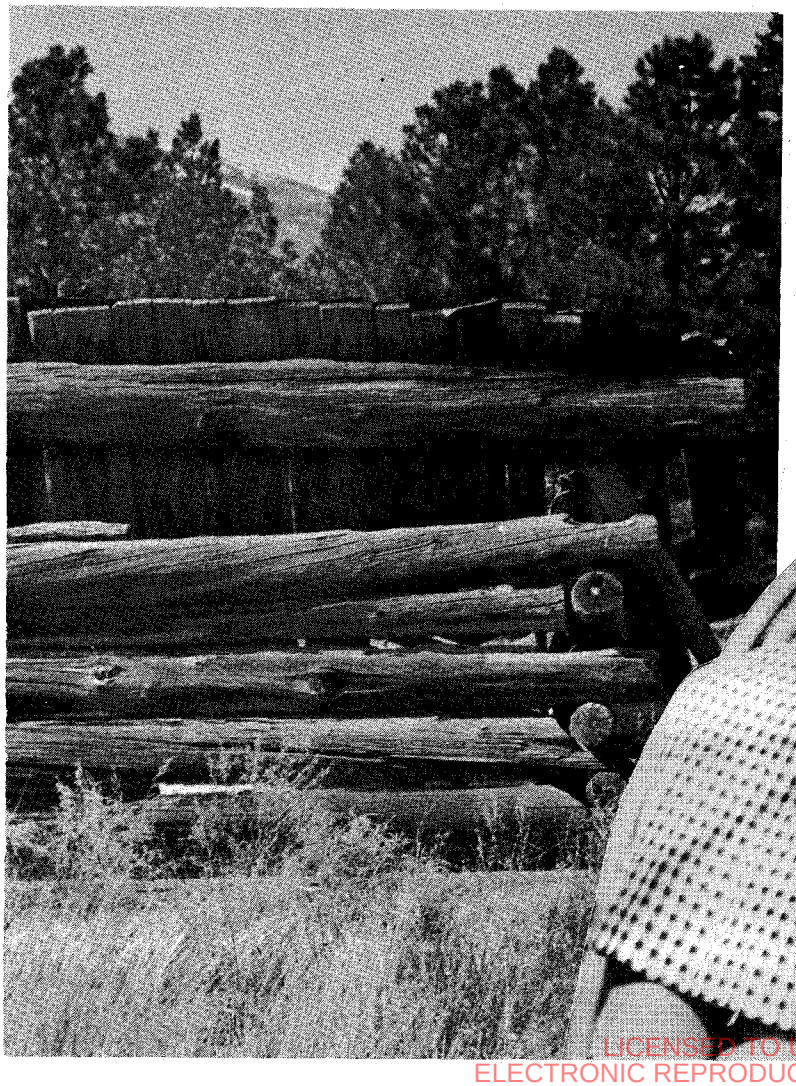


TWENTY MILES northwest of the big mountains somebody nailed together a board shack on the south slope of Slate Mountain. It wasn't discovered by prospectors until it was falling apart. Whoever put it there wasn't seeking solitude having a southern exposure. The prospectors discovered a tunnel concealed by heavy timber. It had been blasted in, and the rocks were too big to bother with mucking out to see what might be inside. Small, hardly noticeable Slate Mountain is not volcanic in origin.

A rather large cabin of peeled pine log exists west of the San Franciscos. Right behind the rear wall a shaft was driven straight down and a windlass placed over it. Surface evidence indicates

(Continued on page 61)

Above, the wooden plank shack on Slate Mountain, near a blasted-in mine tunnel. Below, Mrs. James Halliday didn't know that the rocks given to her by her son were rich in platinum and gold ore.



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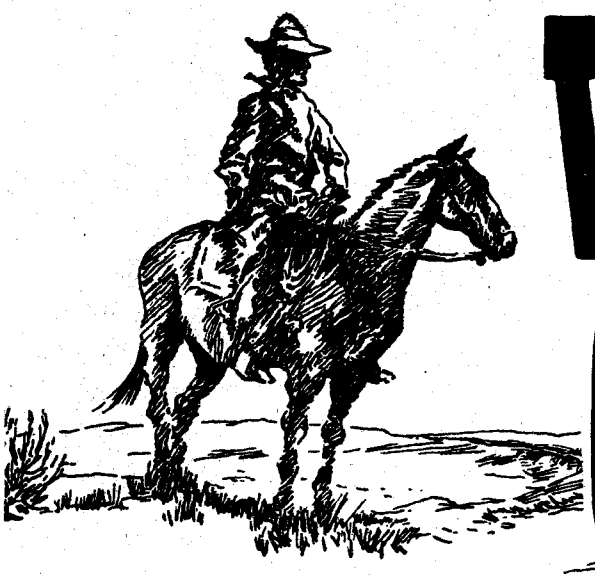
YOURS UNTIL DEATH, WILLIAM GROUNDS



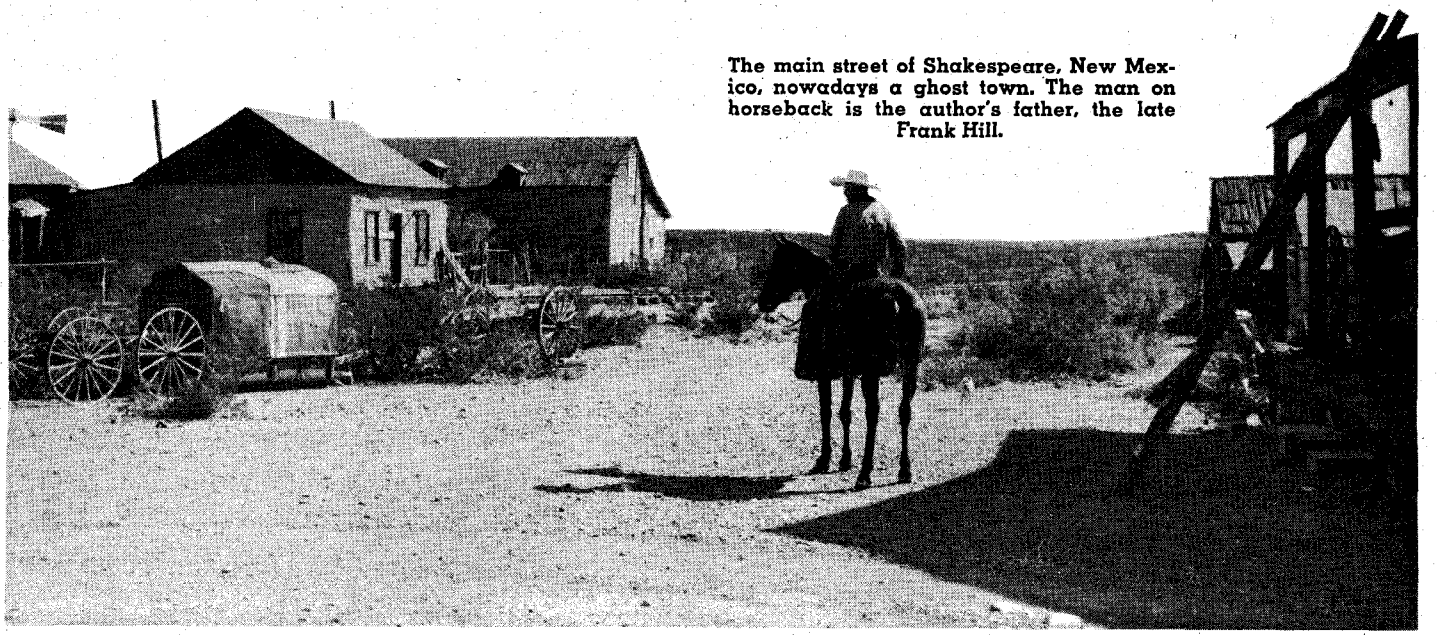
MANY a lonely boy drifted west in the 1870s. Many a homesick Texas lad left Reconstruction troubles, poverty, or damaged reputation behind and made a new start in the mining town of Shakespeare in southwestern New Mexico. Some prospered and became honored citizens, owning millions of acres of ranch land or rich mining properties. Billy Grounds came west in 1879 but the only land he ever acquired was a plot six by three.

However, during his three years in New Mexico and Arizona, Billy dreamed constantly of wealth, of earning money to help his family and ease the heavy burdens upon his mother. And, ironically, his dream has far outlived him in the form of a treasure story which has been

"Young Billie Grounds, he was wild and free
He was still in his teens, just a kid you see.
Young Billie Grounds, reckless, brave, and bold;
He lost his life and caused much grief,
All for the sake of gold."

—from the song "Young Billie Grounds" by Edith B. Johnson

By JANALOO HILL
Photos Courtesy Author



The main street of Shakespeare, New Mexico, nowadays a ghost town. The man on horseback is the author's father, the late Frank Hill.

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William Grounds' mother. A woman with considerable education, she did her best to bring her family up right.

told and retold for nearly ninety years and shows every sign of being told for many more—unless, of course, in the meantime someone finds the treasure.

But to the historian and student of human nature there is a more accessible treasure—the collection of letters written by William Grounds to his mother back in Dripping Springs, Texas. He probably wrote other letters but only six seem to have survived the years, and indeed it is wonderful his family managed to save these.

The boy who would later take the name "William A. (or G.) Grounds" was born in central Texas on November 26, 1862. He joined five brothers and one sister in the uncertain world of the wartime South. Less than two years after Billy's birth his father became an innocent and unofficial victim of the War Between the States. He was shot down as he stood in his yard by a group of riders who, it turned out, had mistaken him for another man.

This left the widow and her seven children, the oldest boy thirteen, the youngest not yet two, to somehow scratch a living from the soil and keep themselves safe in a rather lawless country. It must have been terribly hard. Billy's mother married a second time but this union does not seem to have helped the financial situation much, merely giving her two more small additions to the family, a boy and a girl.

Billy's eldest brother, a very intelligent and hard working young man, died in 1878 and his death may have had something to do with Billy's decision to go west. And there is also a suggestion that Billy had a little trouble with someone and may have felt that it would be safer to change his name and residence for a while. Certain it is that he did not leave because of any disagreement with his mother. His letters show he was devoted to her and missed his home with all his lonely young heart.

THE FIRST letter is dated Silver City, New Mexico, December 20, 1879.

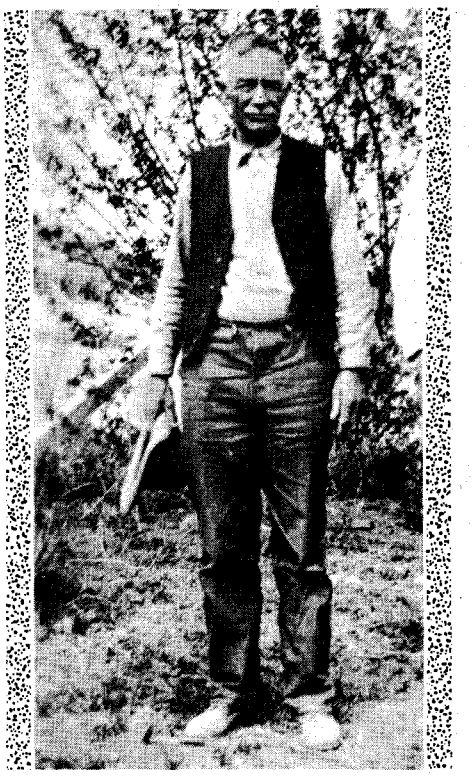
Dear Mother, I take the pleasure of dropping you a few lines to tell you how I am. I am well and doing well and in hopes when these few lines may come to hand if they will find you all well. I am going to work Monday for $2.00 per day. I am now in Shakespeare.

The statement that he was in Shakespeare when the letter was datelined Silver City (fifty miles away) indicates that these letters may have been products of many days' writing. One can almost see Billy crouched before a campfire or a rough fireplace, writing a few lines after he had finished his day's work, stubby pencil clutched in his hand, young face screwed up with concentration. Writing wasn't very easy work for him and his penmanship and spelling are far from perfect.

His older brother, James, born and educated before the holocaust of the Civil War, wrote letters which outclass many written by high school graduates today, but young Billy had few opportunities for education. Perhaps all his learning came from his mother or an older brother who spared him a little time from their hard and busy lives. It is amazing that Billy could express himself as well as he did. He continues:

Ma, write to me soon and direct your letters to W. A. Grounds. Tell J. B. [writing hard to read here] to write to me and tell Ace [or Alf] to write to me and tell all my friends to write me soon and tell me all of the news. Ma, I am coming home in the spring shore as hell. Tell that Golldam Sam Good to come after me if he wants me and see if he thinks he can get me. . . . Tell Mag and George to write me soon. Well Ma, I will close so good bye to all.

This reference to Sam Good is intriguing but it has been impossible to find out any more about the affair. It would seem Billy was afraid of the man and perhaps this trouble had something to do with his leaving for New Mexico.



William Grounds' older brother, taken several years before his death in 1922. Young Billy, as far as anyone knows never had his picture taken.

With a few months of rough frontier living under his belt perhaps Billy felt more able to meet this Good. Mag was Billy's older sister and George her husband. Ace and Bird were the little half-brother and sister.

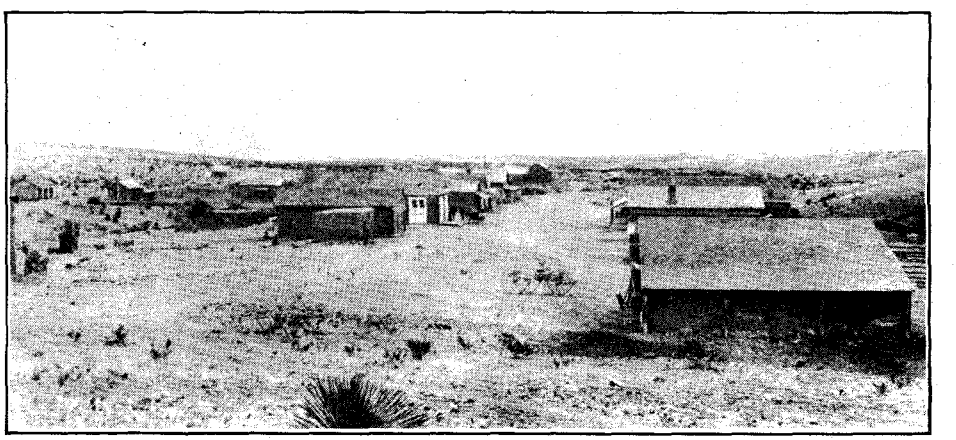
The next letter is dated April 27, 1880.

Dear Mother. I got your kind and welcome letter. Ma I got your letter. Ma I would like to see you all now and have a long talk with all once more. Ma I have got lots of friends here but none of the boys that I came out here with are with me now. Ma, they are all gone and Charles Cannon he ran off the other night. Left here afoot and nobody knows where he has gone to. He did not have nothing with him atall but what he had on 7 days ago and I can't hear anything atall from him.

(Continued on page 54)

Shakespeare's main street about 1890.

Emma M. Muir Collection



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MUSTANGERS AND THEIR METHODS

When the spirit and mind of a wild horse and a cowboy were almost interchangeable, one wonders how many stallions escaped because their trackers let them — or how many were caught because they'd formed a bond with those two-legged shadows who kept on their trail

By LORA M. CONANT
Photos Courtesy Author

TRADITIONALLY, as long as a colt followed a branded mare he belonged to the owner of the brand. When he broke away from the mare he was a mustang —fit prey for any man clever or fleet enough to capture him. The free wild horses were interesting, beautiful, and worth recording; but nothing of a horse nature was as interesting as the men who trailed, tricked, and captured them. Most of these men had ridden almost from birth—and the seat of a saddle was more comfortable for them than the latest thing in chairs.

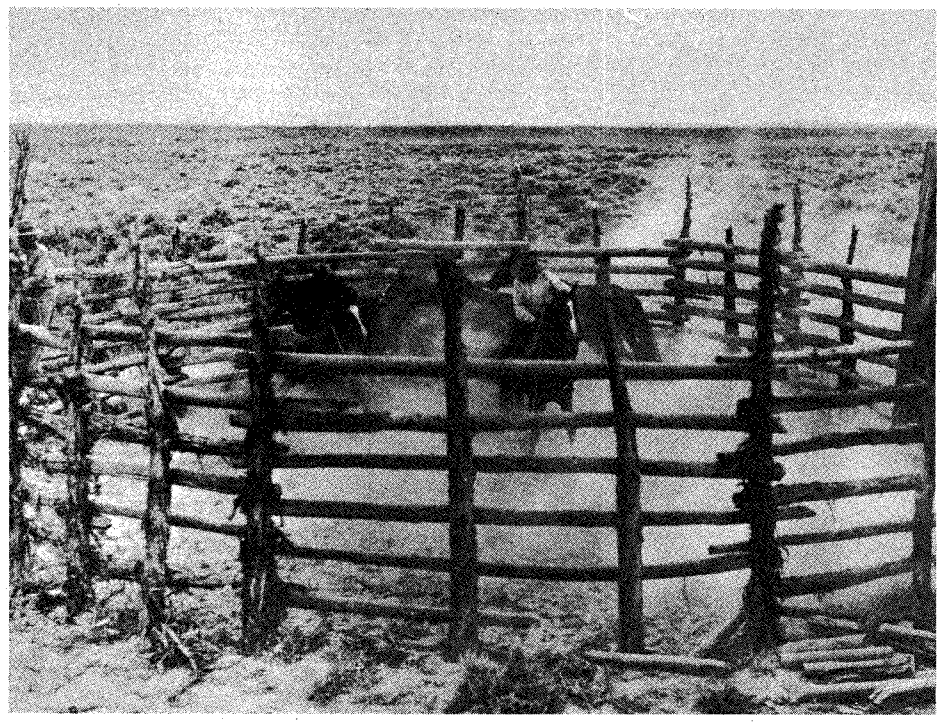
Cowboys and horses understood one another's ways—but the wild horse was a bit more "hep" than the cow pony. When caught and tamed, the wild stallion seemed to lose a bit of the instinct that made him almost impossible to catch and tame. One of the saddest sights in the world was the caged-look in the eyes of a wild mustang stallion who knew any attempt to escape was futile.

Frank Dobie in his writing on mustangs seemed most nearly to understand them. For this understanding he gave credit to Bob Lemmons, a Negro mustanger, and to Asa Jones, a rancher at Alpine, Texas. Mr. Dobie admitted, of course, that bunches of wild horses vary. An able stallion as a leader—mean enough to drive lesser studs away—has much to do with the quality of the manada. His ability, however, must not only show in his ability to rule but also in his choice of mares. A worthy group of foals is unlikely if he lets farm mares and other common stock join the manada.

Jack Thorpe writes of a girl mustanger who was tops in her line. One time she was trying to rope a sorrel stallion that was crowding the rest of the running horses to avade her. The sorrel, however, did not escape. The girl slipped from her seat onto the wild one's back. Her saddle was a sheepskin pad cinched to her mount by a surcingle which bore two brass stirrups. In her hand was a hair rope ten feet long. As she mounted the sorrel she threw a loop over his head. She tightened the noose and made two half hitches around his nose. With this poor equipment she guided her new mustang out and away from the wild bunch. The sorrel was soon controlled and yielded to the pull of the hair lariat.

The family of this girl made a living by catching wild mustangs. They lived in a snug camp close to a favorite watering place for the wild horses. After the

Breaking a wild one.



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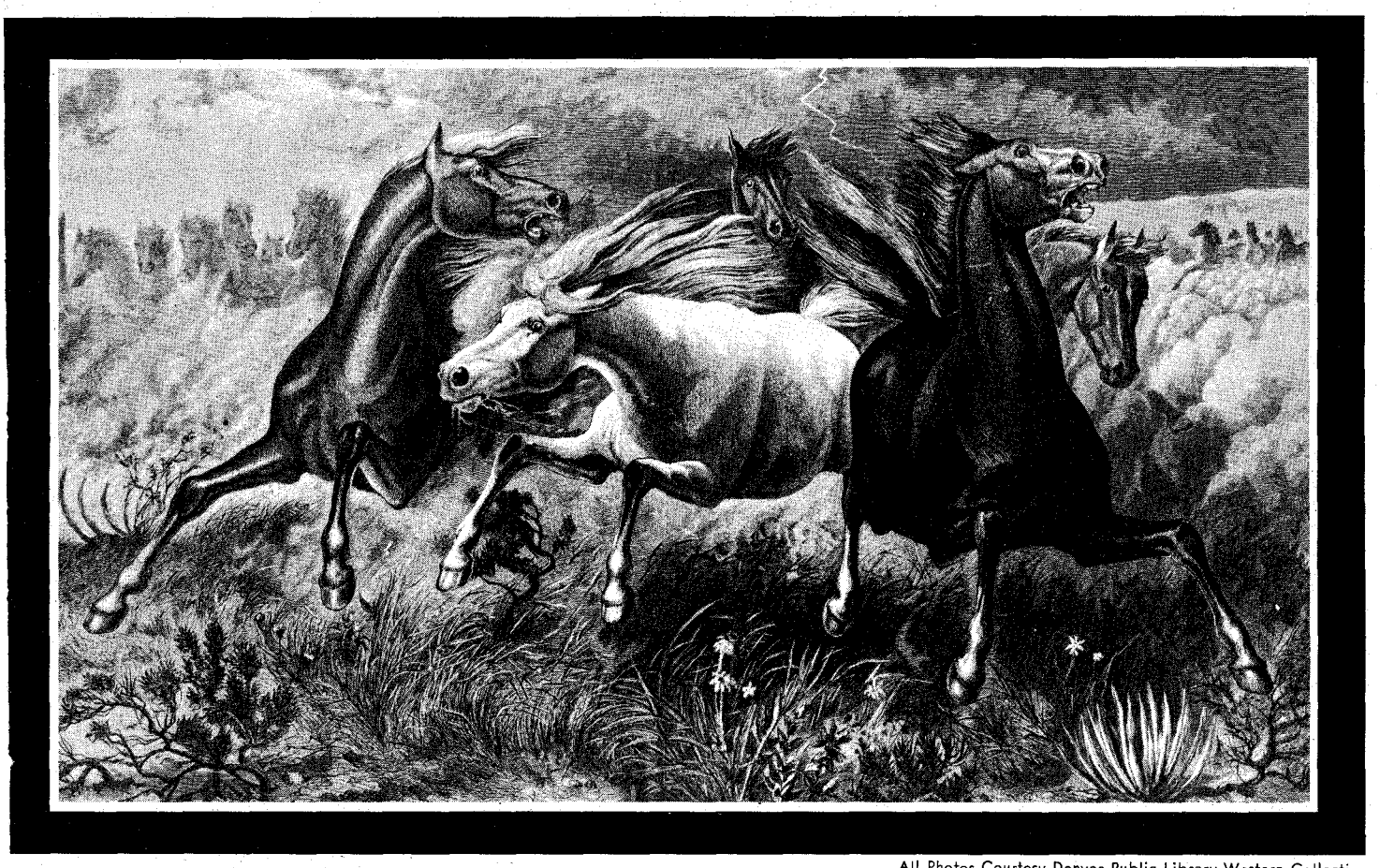


Wild mustangs—drawing by W. M. Cary.

All Photos Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

family had caught about fifty head, they returned to their native settlement to spend the winter.

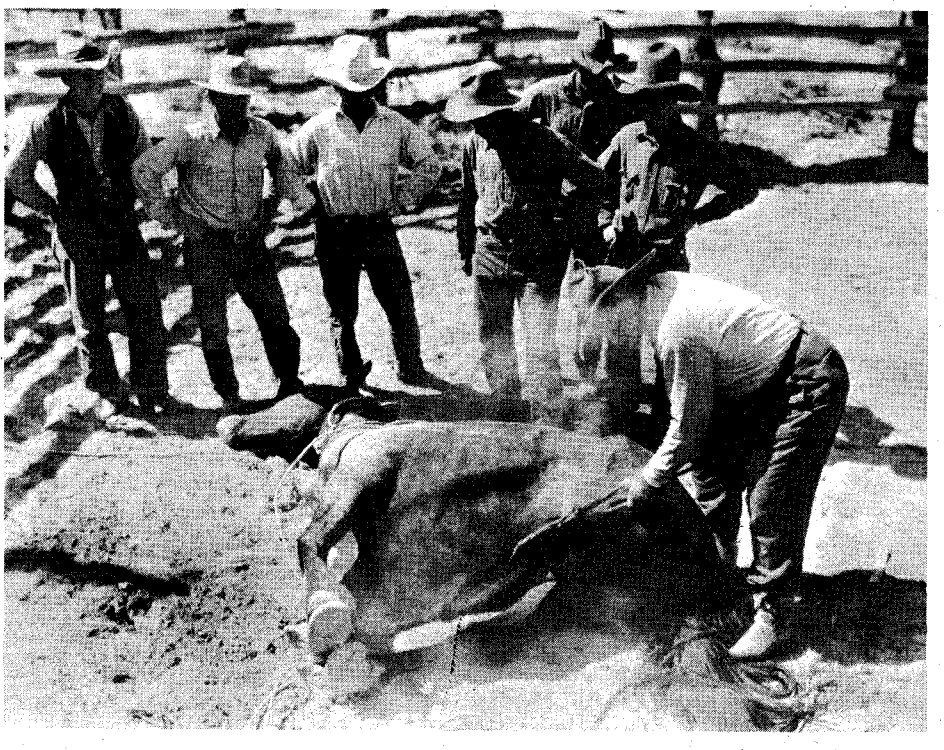
Mustanger Gray caught his stallions by arranging a snare. He chose a place with water and trees nearby—and from a low branch looped the stallion he desired. A rope fastened to a tree gave the animal no chance of escape. Gray did not try to touch him at first but let him have time to fight the rope and the tree—and realize there was no way to get free. At last—weary and sweating—the wild mustang gave in and let the man have his way with him. Stealing colts was so easy that few real mustangers would condescend to acquire a horse herd by that means, but many lesser lights—with more need and less pride—could acquire a nice little herd in this way. There was often much cruelty practiced in their securing of colts—a pity, for a horse is far too beautiful an animal to be hurt or maimed.

THE earliest Anglo-Saxon mustanger, reportedly, was Edward Everett Hale. His first knowledge of mustanging was gathered from the Comanche Indians with whom he lived for two years before he branched out on his own. It is claimed that on his last raid he brought in a thousand wild horses. All mustanging tales must be taken with a grain of salt, of course. When a tale becomes a legend it is likely to expand its girth.

One of the most original of mustangers was Bob Lemmons. He had an Indian look—but was born in the South of mixed white and Negro blood. He had lived so long among the wild horses that he seemed more mustang than mustanger. He would stay so long with the wild bunch that they would accept him—even follow him. There was no viciousness in his conquest of the horses; he did not maim horses or starve them for water. One thing that added to his success, I think, was that he always worked alone. The mustangs became accustomed to his

(Continued on page 38)

Branding a mustang.



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Boone Helm—Man Eater

(Continued from page 9)

cabin, and perforce went into winter quarters.

"Their provisions soon being all gone they commenced subsisting on their horses, killing one after another, until they had eaten them all but a celebrated racehorse which had been valued on the Upper Columbia at over a thousand dollars. Seeing now that they must all perish unless they soon reached a point where supplies could be obtained, the racehorse had to share the fate of the others. His meat was 'jerked' or hastily dried, that they might the more conveniently carry it on their backs. They then made snow-shoes of the hides of the horses, and started back towards, and aimed to reach, Fort Hall, where they supposed they would meet with human beings of some kind, white men, half-breeds, or Indians.

"The party kept together until they had got beyond Soda Springs, where some had become so exhausted they could scarcely travel—and their meat getting frightfully small in amount, Helm and a man named Burton concluded not to endanger their own lives by waiting for the wearied ones, so they left them behind.

"The two finally reached the Snake river, and moved down it in search of Fort Hall, having nothing to eat but the prickly-pear plant. When they had reached the site of Cantonment Loring, Burton, starving, weary, and snow-blinded, was unable to proceed; and a good vacant house being there, Helm left him, and continued on for Fort Hall.

"Reaching the fort, he found it without an occupant. He then returned and reached Burton about dark. When out in the willows hard by, procuring firewood, he heard the report of a pistol. Running back into the house, he found Burton had committed suicide by shooting himself. He then concluded to try and find his way into Salt Lake valley. Cutting off, well up in the thigh, Burton's remaining leg (he had eaten the other) he rolled the limb up in an old red flannel shirt, tied it across his shoulder, and started.

"About eight miles out he met an Indian going in his Lodge. He entreated the savage to take him along; but the Indian said he had nothing himself to eat, and that his family was starving. Helm exhibited handfuls of gold coin, when the Indian consented to his accompanying him.

"He remained at this lodge about two weeks, paying the Indian ten dollars a meal. His food consisted of ants and an unpalatable herb, called in the mountains the 'tobacco plant.'

"The above facts Helm gave me with tears in his eyes, and said, 'I will give you all I have in the world—which is only nine dollars—to take me to the settlements.' I told him I did not desire money for helping a man in his condition.

"That same evening, the Indian with whom Helm had been stopping, visited me. His name was Mo-quip. I had known him for several years, He fully corroborated Helm's story, in regard to the carrying and eating the body of his companion. 'When I first tasted of the flesh,' said Mo-quip in his own tongue, 'I knew not what it was, but told the stranger it was good game—better than I had myself. The stranger then took hold of one of the corners of a red shirt that was around his pack, and jerked it up, when a white man's leg, the lower end ragged from gnawing, rolled out on the ground.' Altogether Helm had paid Mo-quip two hundred and eighty dollars.

"Having given him a new suit of buckskin, and furnished him with a horse, he set out with my party for Salt Lake City. Just after pitching my lodge the first evening after starting with him, 'Grand Maison,' very much frightened, came to me with a sack of gold coins which he said Helm had asked him to conceal until they reached Salt Lake City. I took the money and counted it —it amounted to fourteen hundred dollars.

"Though satisfied there was something wrong, I said nothing, and took Helm on to the settlements. Having ascertained in the meantime that he was the worst kind of a desperado, I called him to me as soon as we had reached the end of the journey, and handed him his money, saying, 'You can now take care of yourself.' He coolly put the coin in his pocket, without expressing a syllable of thankfulness for the assistance I had rendered him.

"It was not long until he had squandered all he had in gambling and drinking, and was finally expelled from Salt Lake valley for his atrocities.

"Hoping these facts may be of service to you, allow me to subscribe myself,

Your obt. servant
JOHN W. POWELL"

Helm relished feats of physical skill, especially hurling his Bowie knife into the ground from horseback and retrieving it at a full gallop.

THERE have been claims that back in 1857 Boone Helm participated in the infamous Mountain Meadows Massacre, when a band of Mormons descended upon a wagontrain and wiped out more than a hundred men, women and children. There are no records to substantiate Helm's presence there, not that it would have been beyond possibility as far as he was concerned. Nathaniel Langford asserts that Helm was on good terms with the Mormons at the time of his arrival in Salt Lake City with Powell's party, and added that he had "good reason for believing that before Helm fled from Salt Lake City he murdered, in cold blood, two citizens. . . ."

At length, via a circuitous route through southern Utah, he reached San

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Francisco but, having no desire to stay in California which his earlier escapades had made too hot for his continued good health, he boarded a ship for Oregon and wound up once more in The Dalles. There he soon drifted back into ways of murder and highway robbery, becoming in the parlance of the time a "road agent." In fact this was his whole way of life, interspersed with periods when he worked as a gambler. Thomas Dimsdale remarked that Helm "was considered a prominent desperado, and was never known to follow any trade for a living, except that of road agent, in which he was thoroughly versed."

Gold had been discovered along the Salmon River, and Boone made his way to the fields and began robbing men on the trail. Nathaniel Langford accused him of "several murders which were committed along the route leading from the Columbia River to the gold mines." When the law grew too interested in him, Helm decided to head north to the new gold strikes along the Fraser River, over the border in British Columbia. According to Langford he went up to Washington Territory, stole a herd of horses, and drove them to Vancouver Island where he sold them for a considerable sum.

The gold diggings along the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, discovered four years earlier, and the smaller strikes in the Cariboo country—which would boom a year later—appealed to Helm and seemed to offer rich pickings for his peculiar talents. He decided to stay for a while. The settlements were full of lucky or hopeful miners and more recent arrivals in the form of traders, merchants, saloonmen, card sharps, prostitutes, thieves and others who practiced the art of getting rich without digging in the ground or panning icy streams. Many of the miners there had known Boone Helm in California or the Salmon River country and looked upon his arrival with dismay.

In August 1861, Major John Thorp, a large cattle owner from Washington Territory, hit upon the idea of driving a herd north to the Cariboo country and hired a crew to make the 800-mile trip from the Yakima Valley to the diggings. Among the cowboys was sixteen-year-old Andrew Jackson "Jack" Splawn from Missouri, a well-educated youngster, shrewd, trustworthy and observant.

The herd moved north, halting at various places along the route so the cattle could take advantage of good grass. One such stop was made at the town of Cottonwood in Washington Territory, and it was here that Jack Splawn met up with Boone Helm, as usual on the lookout for easy pickings. He often spoke to the youth in town and seemed friendly, though Splawn did not know who he was.

"A strange man had been in Cottonwood a couple of weeks and had become quite friendly with me," Jack Splawn recalled years later. "One evening we had a talk. He asked me if my people had not come from Missouri, said that his parents and mine had been neighbours back in the good old state, and that my older brothers had been his playmates. Then, looking steadily at me, he said, 'My name is Boone Helm. Did you ever hear of me?' "

Young Splawn had heard a great deal of him, none of it good. "The very name spelled blood and crime," he said later, adding that the story of Helm's cannibalism had been the talk of the Northwest. "He had been seen, so it was claimed, with the shoulder of a human being." The youth timorously admitted that he had indeed heard of Boone Helm.

"He came closer," Splawn said, "and almost hissed in my ear: 'You waste your time here. You are young and you will never get ahead. Join me; make big money. This country is tame. We will make one big haul, and then skip.' I shuddered at the thought of being linked with such a creature. He had stopped at nothing."

Splawn, of course, did not accept Boone Helm's invitation to crime and warned his boss, Major Thorp, about the stranger. The herd moved northward to the Cariboo country and most of the cowboys stayed on there to try their luck as miners. Splawn handled the sale of the cattle, netting a neat $7,000 for the Major, who had remained behind in Cottonwood to do some horse trading and transact other business. Splawn and Major Thorp started back to Washington Territory, traveling to Fort Alexander and outfitting there for the 200-mile ride to Fort Yale, the head of navigation on Fraser River. The Major was now carrying gold dust worth $20,000.

"The second night out I woke up to find my companion sitting up by a big fire, his weapons close at hand," Splawn recalled. "When I sang out to know what the trouble was, he motioned silence. I rose and went over to him. 'Jack' he said, 'Boone Helm is in this neighborhood. He hung around Van Winkle, you know, till a short time ago, then disappeared. Well, I dreamed just now that he was creeping up to camp with an axe ready to strike. I saw that fiendish look in his eye right over me.' The Major actually shuddered. If Helm were around, the Major must have been beside himself to sit in the glare of the campfire as a target. We smothered the fire and sat in darkness till morning, and we kept a guard after this."

The two men traveled on to Fort Yale and then took an Indian canoe down to New Westminster where they booked passage on the steamer *Caledonia* bound for Victoria. There they transferred to the *Eliza Anderson* sailing for Oympia, Washington Territory.

"The first person to greet me aboard was Boone Helm," Splawn said. "He was full of whiskey and his tongue wagged at both ends. Grasping my shoulder, he burst out with an oath, 'What's the matter with the old man? What's his card, bub? Hey? I could have had you at Deep Creek, but the old son-of-a-gun got up. A knock on the head is good medicine, damn you, when there's dust around. What did he build that big fire for, and you sit up too?' Evading the ruffian, I hunted up the Major and told him that dreams sometimes were true. He intended having Helm arrested at Olympia, but during the night the outlaw raised a disturbance, shouting for Jeff Davis, and was taken off at Seattle."

WHETHER Boone Helm was genuinely a Confederate sympathizer is not known. He was heard noisily in support of President Jefferson Davis on several recorded occasions, and his last words on earth were a rebel yell and a salute to the Confederate leader. More than likely Boone Helm's vocal support for the South was little more than a form of provocation offered to Northerners. There is no record that he robbed, murdered and ate only supporters of the Union while displaying undying friendship and devotion to all Southerners.

If Helm was charged with making a nuisance of himself aboard the *Eliza Anderson* the records have not survived. More than likely he was just set ashore at Seattle to get rid of his shouting and drunken talk. He probably proceeded no farther south, returning almost at once to the Cariboo country.

Certainly he was there in April 1862 when "Uncle Dan" Drumheller met him along the Fraser River at Lillooet. Drumheller, who had made his way to the West Coast from Missouri in 1854

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and who spent his entire and very long life in the Far West and Northwest, reported that Boone Helm's activities in the area stretched back over the past year and had made him notorious. His partner in crime, one "Brockey Jack," was of similar ilk.

"[Helm and Brockey Jack] and half a dozen other desperadoes had drifted into that country the year before from the Salmon River mines of Idaho," Drumheller recalled many years later. "There had already been a number of murders and robberies in British Columbia attributed to this band of cut-throats."

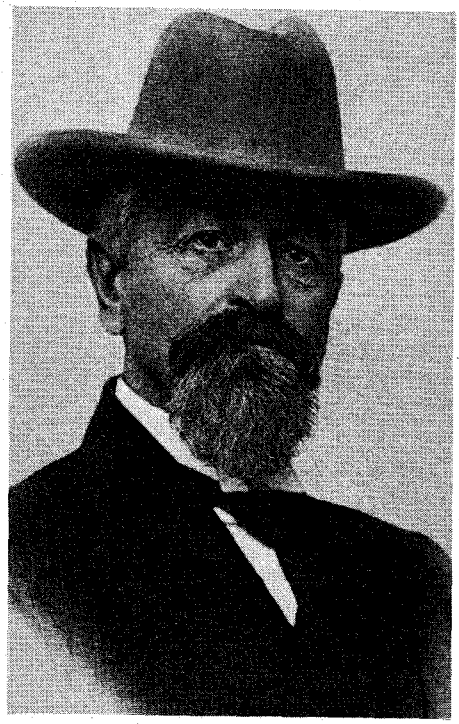
They gave no trouble to Uncle Dan that spring, although he learned later that their plans had included an attempt to waylay and kill him for some money he was carrying. He never knew what had happened to make them abandon their intention. (Eventually Brockey Jack wound up at the end of a Vigilante rope at Wallula, Washington, in the spring of 1864. Before he died he made a confession which was written down, and which Drumheller subsequently was shown and from it learned of the men's intention to waylay him two years earlier.)

Shortly after meeting Drumheller on the Fraser River Helm seems to have left British Columbia and returned to the United States, for by June he was in trouble again, this time in Idaho Territory. He reached the town of Florence in the early summer of 1862, and soon found—to quote Nathaniel Langford—"congenial associates." His own forceful personality, which made him want to be the leader of any enterprise of which he was a part, soon asserted itself and he watched jealously the way in which a local character known as "Dutch Fred" (who was, in fact, German) was regarded by the community.

"A man of that mixed character which united the qualities of a gambler, a skilful pugilist, and an honest, straightforward miner in his single person, known only as 'Dutch Fred,' at this time enjoyed a local notoriety in Florence which had won for him among his comrades the appelation of 'Chief,'" wrote Langford. "He was neither a rowdy nor desperado, and in an ordinary deal, honest and generous; but he gambled, drank, and when roused, was a perfect Hercules in a fight."

Helm was approached by an enemy of this local celebrity who wanted him killed. No doubt a fee was discussed and probably changed hands. The job would have suited Helm well enough, for it was only a matter of time before he would have clashed with Dutch Fred for his own reasons. To be paid for doing what he planned to do anyway would have appealed to him.

"Helm, having been plied with liquor at the request of an enemy of Fred's, sought him out for the purpose of provoking a fight," Langford said. "Entering the saloon where Fred was seated at a faro table, Helm with many oaths and epithets and flourishes of his revolver, challenged Fred to an immediate deadly combat. Fred sprung up, drew his knife, and was advancing to close



Courtesy Oregon Historical Society

Andrew Jackson Splawn had his first encounter with Boone Helm at the age of sixteen.

with the drunken braggart, when the bystanders interfered and deprived both of their weapons, which they trusted to the keeping of the saloon-keeper, and Fred returned quietly to his game.

"Helm apologized, and expressed regret for his conduct, and left the saloon. A few hours afterwards he returned. Fred was still there. Stepping up to the saloon-keeper, Helm asked for his revolver, promising he would immediately depart and make no disturbance. No sooner was it returned to him than he turned towards Fred, and uttering a diabolical oath, fired at him while seated at the table. The ball missed, and before the second fire, Fred, unarmed, with his hands folded across his breast, stood before his antagonist, who, with deadlier aim, pierced his heart. He fell dead upon the spot. Helm cocked the pistol, and looking towards the stupefied crowd, exclaimed: 'Maybe some more of you want some of this!' As no one deigned a reply, he walked coolly away."

If Boone Helm hoped that he would get away with the killing of Dutch Fred on the grounds that there had been provocation, which would have made it a "killing" rather than a "murder," he was sorely mistaken. The provocation had been all on his side, and while Dutch Fred might have got away with killing Boone Helm, the reverse was certainly not to be the case.

Thomas Dimsdale's comment that "the victim had given him no provocation whatever; it was a mere drunken spree and shooting scrape," was echoed by the entire community, and arrangements were made quickly for Helm's arrest.

Whether he was apprehended and let out on bail pending trial, or whether, having seen the temper of the town, he decided to move on, is not known. What is clear is that he left with great haste for British Columbia and once more joined his old pal Brockey Jack. He had killed Dutch Fred in June. Only a matter of weeks later he was involved in another murder.

Uncle Dan Drumheller, who saw the confession made by Brockey Jack a few hours before he dangled from a rope, noted: "The fellow apparently confessed to every crime, murder and attempted murder he ever committed. If this fellow's confession was true he and Boone Helm killed and robbed a Jew on the trail leading out from the Cariboo mines in the summer of 1862."

THEN followed shortly thereafter a triple murder, committed in mid-July by Boone Helm and a man he had joined up with after parting company with Brockey Jack. The murders were remembered vividly more than thirty years later by two men who had been in the area at the time.

"Tom Harvey, alias Irish Tommy, and myself left Antler Creek in company with Sokoloski and two Frenchmen for Forks Quesnelle," recalled prospector W. T. Collinson. "This was on or about the 18th of July, 1862. We journeyed together until we arrived at Keithly Creek, where the three aforementioned gentlemen, carrying on a mule and two horses about $32,000 in coarse gold, stopped for dinner, Harvey and I journeying on about three miles to the ferry, where we cooked our repast *à la mode* Cariboo."

Collinson and Harvey pressed on toward Quesnelle Forks and on the way met two men some three miles from the settlement. Collinson said that he subsequently became "quite satisfied" that it was "Boone Helm and his chum." There was no exchange of pleasantries, or otherwise, and the two travelers arrived at Quesnelle Forks that evening.

Another man, a government official named Browning, was also on the trail, though heading toward the Cariboo country rather than away from it. The day after Collinson and Harvey met Helm and his new companion on the trail, Browning had a brief encounter with Helm, though the badman was alone.

Being a courteous soul, Browning bade Helm good day and received in return what he later described as a "threat." Thinking nothing more of the ill-mannered stranger, Browning pushed on toward Quesnelle Forks.

"The trail leading down the mountain to the Forks of Quesnelle was a mile long, and as I came near the base of the mountain I saw on the trail on the other side leading to the little village a procession of men carrying three stretchers," Browning recalled. "I found on meeting them that they were carrying three dead men. They were found on the trail coming from Cariboo, robbed and murdered, for it was known that each of them was carrying bags of gold dust from Williams Creek to the coast. Who was the murderer, or who were the murderers? Everybody said in whispers it was Boone Helm. . . . He was known to have been on the trail, and he it was I

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probably met a few hours after the murder was committed."

W. T. Collinson and "Irish Tommy" were still in Quesnelle Forks when the bodies of Sokoloski and the two Frenchmen were brought in.

"They had made a brave fight, every man's pistol (good six-shooters) was empty, and each man had a bullet through the head," Collinson wrote. "Boone Helm and his chum killed these three men, took and hid the dust and if no stranger has found it, it is there yet, for Boone left the country."

There was no magistrate or coroner in town and, according to Browning, "the solitary constable was drunk." A mass meeting was called. Browning was elected to act as coroner and a verdict of "willful murder" was returned. Browning was then appointed temporary magistrate, with a young Jewish fellow as his clerk, and a properly constituted court was set up in accordance with legal requirements.

One or two suspicious men were arrested, examined and then let go, Browning wrote. "Everybody said the murderer was Boone Helm." A purse of $700 was raised to cover the expenses of pursuit and a reward, but it was not claimed as Helm escaped.

Collinson, by this time, had left Quesnelle Forks in the hope of buying some new horses for a freighting enterprise. He traveled in the area for more than a week, ending his trip by staying for a few days with a friend near Williams Lake. Then he set off for Lytton.

"I met Boone Helm and his chum at Little Bloody Run," he said later. "The first thing I heard was, 'throw up your hands', and looking up I saw the muzzle of a double-barreled shotgun about four feet from my head. It took his partner about five minutes to cut my pack straps, after taking my six-shooter and purse. The latter contained three Mexican dollars and three British shillings. One of my old shirts contained a good wad of dust, but when the blankets were unrolled the shirt with others rolled out and a small bag containing bullets attracted their attention and saved my dust, which being tied in the old shirt pocket inside was not seen. They emptied my pistol, gave it back to me and told me to git and not look back. As my road was down hill I lost no time."

SCARED to go back to the Quesnelle Forks region to retrieve Sokoloski's gold dust, Boone Helm and his partner separated for the time being. The movements of the partner are not known, but Helm himself headed west. At Pemberton Lake, suffering from his usual chronic lack of funds, he killed an English ship's carpenter known as "Little Billy." He cut the man's throat and threw the body into the lake. It cannot have pleased him that all the unfortunate victim had on him was $5 in coin.

Helm arrived in the city of Victoria, mecca of the Cariboo miners, broke and troublesome as always. On Sunday afternoon, October 13, he walked into the Adelphi Saloon on the corner of Government and Yates Streets and called for whisky. After taking three drinks he turned to leave, but was courteously reminded by the bartender that he had not paid.

"I'm Boone Helm," the outlaw said softly. "And I'm a dangerous man."

The proprietor, observing the incident, slipped out and summoned Police Sergeant Blake. Told to pay his bill, Helm confessed that he could not. An hour later he was watching the sunset over the Sooke Hills through the barred window of the Bastion Street jail. The following morning he appeared before Magistrate Augustus Pemberton in the Victoria Police Court and was found guilty of causing a disturbance. Sentenced to a month on the rock pile, he spent the next thirty days providing surface materials for some of the growing city's earliest streets.

It is uncharacteristic of Helm that he allowed himself to be taken so easily by Sergeant Blake and that he made no attempt to escape from the work gang. It is hardly to be supposed that he had a healthy respect for the Provincial Police; more probably he was glad enough of three hot meals a day and a bed for the night. And, of course, there was small chance that he would be charged with the murder of Sokoloski and the two Frenchmen, or the murder of Little Billy, for prison was the last place where the authorities would look, even if they heard of those remote events. Word traveled so slowly that by the time the police did learn of the murders Helm would have been released and far away from Victoria.

John X. Beidler served as hangman for the Vigilante Executive Committee.

From the files of the Montana Historical Society

A month later, once again a free man, Helm headed back to the Cariboo country and joined his unnamed partner. They traveled together for several weeks, skirting settlements and scrounging meals from prospectors and freighters, apparently doing nothing to attract attention to themselves while they waited for the time it would be safe to return to Quesnelle Forks for Sokoloski's gold dust.

Then Helm's companion died. Helm later said that the cause of death was "mountain fever," but as he subsequently confessed to having eaten the man it is more than likely that the partner's demise was not from natural causes.

IN THE late fall he was captured on the Fraser River. "The man, Boone Helm, to whom we referred some weeks since, has at last been taken," said a contemporary newspaper report. "He was brought into this city last night strongly ironed. The first clue of the detectives was the report that two men had been seen trudging up the Fraser River on foot, with their blankets and a scanty supply of provisions on their backs. The description of one corresponded with the description given by American officers of Boone Helm. Helm's conduct on the road is conclusive evidence that he was unaware he was being pursued. He passed around the more populous settlements, or through them in the night time. When overtaken, he was so exhausted by fatigue and hunger that it would have been impossible for him to have continued many hours longer. He made no resistance to the arrest—in fact, he was too weak to do so—and acknowledged without equivocation or attempt at evasion that he was Boone Helm. Upon being asked what had become of his companion, he replied with the utmost sang-froid: 'Why, do you suppose that I'm a ---- fool enough to starve to death when I can help it? I ate him up, of course.' The man who accompanied him has not been seen or heard of since, and from what we have been told of this case-hardened villain's antecedents, we are inclined to believe he told the truth. It is said this is not the first time he has been guilty of cannibalism."

Helm proceeded to lie in jail at Cariboo, eating well and regaining his strength. He certainly did not plan to wait around to face a murder charge, but he knew that for the time being he could not hope to get clean away, weakened by malnutrition as he was. When Helm thought he was ready, he escaped and fled toward the American border.

"He was brought back," commented

(Continued on page 30)

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By ROBERT M. HERBERG

Photos Courtesy Author

BLANKET BILL

WILLIAM ROBERT JARMAN'S adventures began early and lasted long. At age twelve in Gravesend, England he quit school and signed on a ship bound for the other side of the world.

Bill, in the days ahead realized that life as a sailor was far different from what he had thought it would be, so when the ship reached Hobart, Tasmania, he and the rest of the crew took matters into their own hands and deserted. Bill's training in self-preservation was about to begin.

The other sailors were soon captured and returned to the ship under guard. Bill hid in the "bush" until hunger drove him out. Then he started to walk, always in a northerly direction, destination unknown. It was common for British sailors of that day not to wear shoes, and Bill used to laugh when he told how his bare feet toughened into leather during his 122-mile trek across Tasmania. It was a rough go, even Bill admitted that, but scattered settlers helped him make his way— eventually to Melbourne where he joined a fur-trading brig with the apt name of *Platypus*. This ship seems to have presented a happier situation for Bill, for he remained with her two years or so, accumulating several hundred dollars worth of seal, platypus and kangaroo skins which he expected to sell in China.

But *Platypus* never made it to the Orient. She swung north for other skins and, unfortunately, had to stop at one of the islands in the Queen Charlotte group off British Columbia for a supply of water. Bill and another sailor went ashore in the ship's boat with several empty casks. They filled all the shore-boat could carry and the other sailor pushed off, expecting to return immediately. Bill was working behind a low bluff, out of sight of the ship, when he heard warwhoops and sounds of combat. The *Platypus* had been attacked! He started to run, but found himself seized from behind with his arms pinned to his sides. A large group of half-naked Indians surrounded him. They bound him and dragged him to their camp.

Below, Fort Bellingham.

Courtesy Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma

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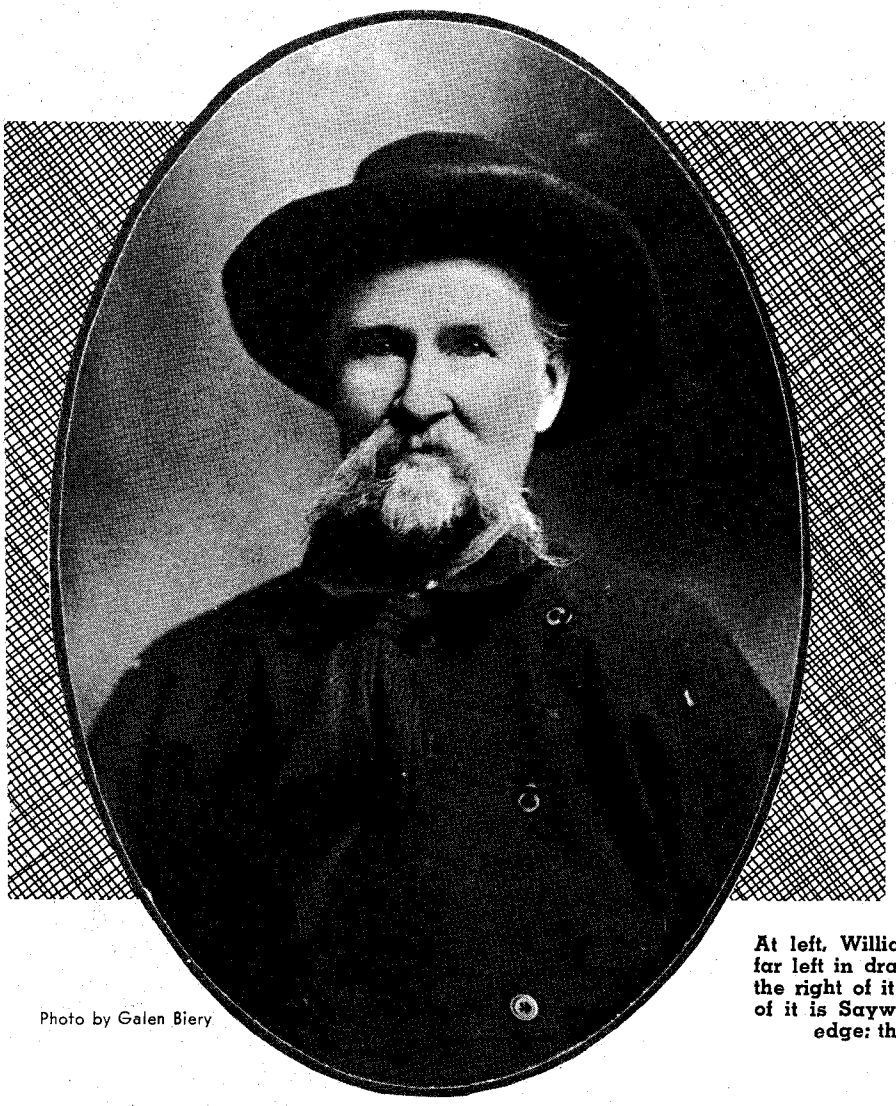


Photo by Galen Biery

It was Bill's fate never to see *Platypus* again nor to know what happened to her, although he believed she was wrecked and the whole crew killed. He believed also that these Indians never before had seen a white man for they actually pinched him to make sure he was real.

Bill's easy-going temperament made it possible for him to adjust to the inevitable. He was assigned to sleep in the chief's split-cedar house, but found it cold and miserable. The food was extremely difficult to take—dried fish and berries saturated in rancid whale oil.

To make himself useful, Bill taught his captors a new trick in fire-making. He showed them how to use a taut bow to make the tinder stick twirl faster. They stared at him fascinated. He traded on their superstition by saying that on a certain day the sun would go away and the heavens become dark. They were frightened, but he assured them he would bring the sun back if they treated him well. Fortunately for him, the prediction of an eclipse he had read in the old *Platypus* almanac came true.

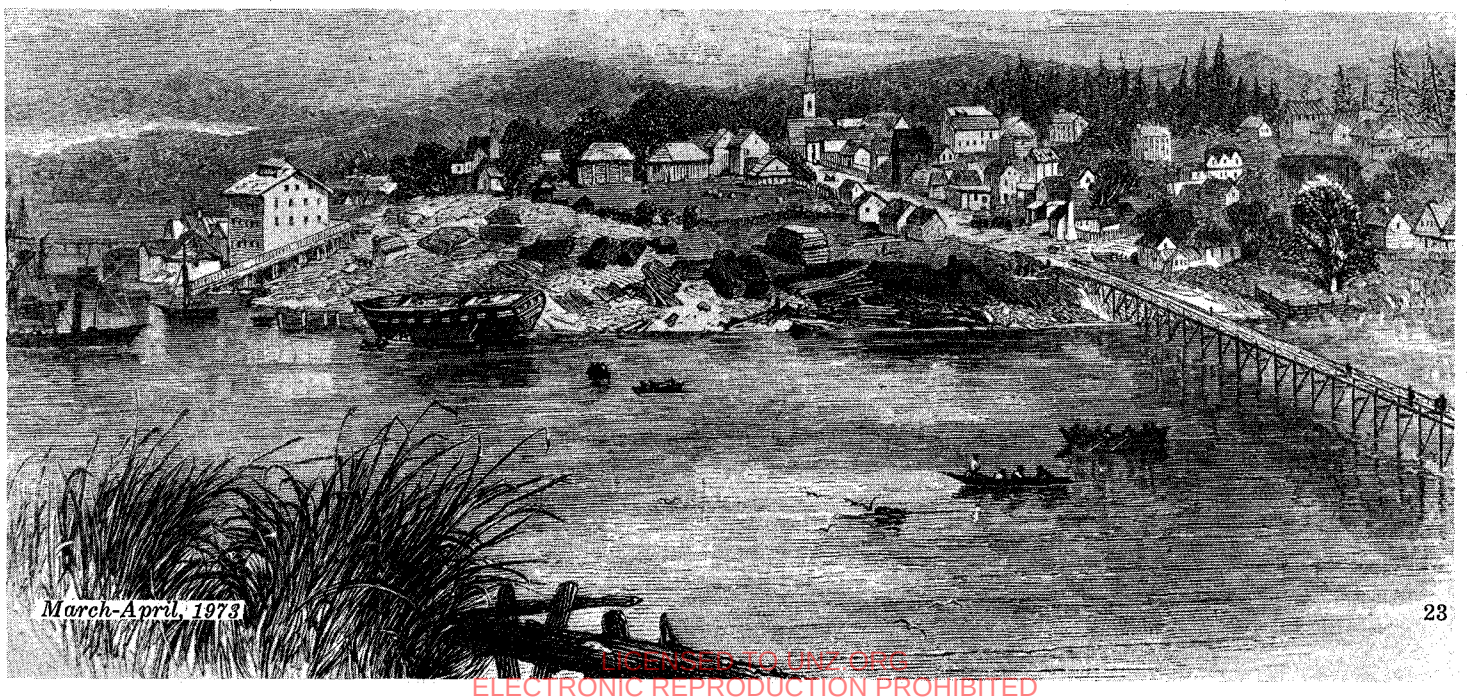
Bill seemed to have a gift for languages, and before long communication came easy. On long hunting and fishing trips the chief found his slave not only useful but companionable. One day he decided that Bill should be married. The

(Continued on page 40)

At left, William Robert Jarman. Below, Victoria, B.C., in 1862. At far left in drawing is the steamer *Formwalt;* large building just to the right of it is the Hudson's Bay Company building; to the right of it is Sayward's Lumber Mill, with a lumber carrier at water's edge; the tall steeple in distance is the Methodist church.

The Indians called him "Paseesie"—the Blanket Man—but at least four other nicknames would have been as apt. Bill was whatever the occasion called for—and there were plenty of occasions in his eighty years!

Courtesy Provincial Archives, Victoria, B.C.



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"ZANE GREY or no Zane Grey! Book or no book! The answer is still NO, Mr. Keith!" said the supervisor of the Salmon National Forest with emphatic finality. "Please quit asking. If Grey wants to get material for a book about that Thunder Mountain country he will just have to wait until we have some rain to change the fire hazard conditions in this district. Until then, nobody —and I mean NOBODY goes camping in the mountains!"

Elmer Keith knew there was no sense in further arguing. And yet, here at Salmon, Idaho was Zane Grey with ten other people waiting to start on a pack trip of several weeks. Plans for this trek in late summer 1931 had been long in the making. As outfitter and guide, Elmer had made arrangements with Grey to take him and his party on a combined hunting and fishing trip into the Salmon River back-country. An added bonus was Grey's expectation of gathering data for a story about Thunder Mountain, where a landslide near the turn of the century had dammed Monument Creek, trapping its water and burying the mining town of Roosevelt under a huge lake.

For the trip Elmer had hired two packers, Jerry Ravndal, a rawhide-tough young cowboy who lived with his parents on their Hughes Creek ranch near North Fork, and a local man we'll call Roy, each to furnish his own string of horses.

Grey had brought his own riding gear and had bought a horse from Fred Carl, a Salmon resident. Grey had agreed to furnish food for both his party and the packers. Everything was ready. Everyone was ready. Then unexpectedly, due to the long, dry spell, the Forest Service had decided not to let them proceed.

It was a rather desperate situation until Salmon City's postmaster, Kenneth McBride, came up with a solution. He owned a ranch about twelve miles south of town, and his land took in about half the shoreline of a high mountain lake known as Williams Lake.

"Zane Grey has never seen country any prettier than that lake," he told Elmer, "and you know what kind of lunker rainbow trout we catch up there. So why wouldn't that be a good place to camp until this fire hazard is past? It is surrounded by forest, but it's still private land, out of any government agency's jurisdiction."

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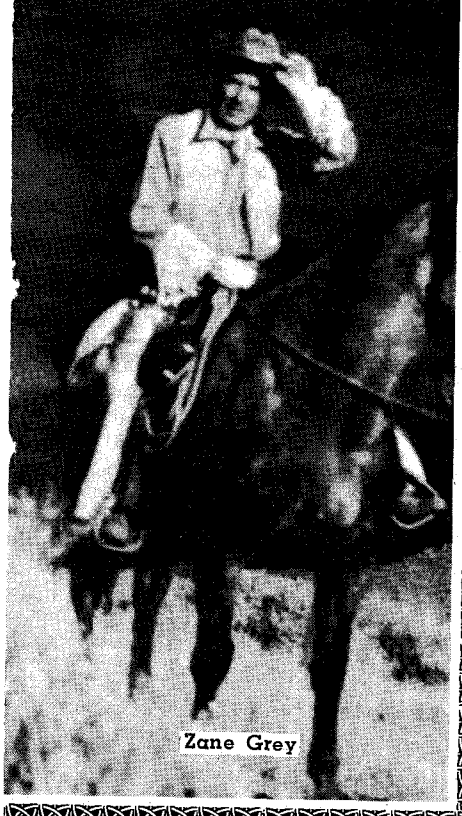
TAIN

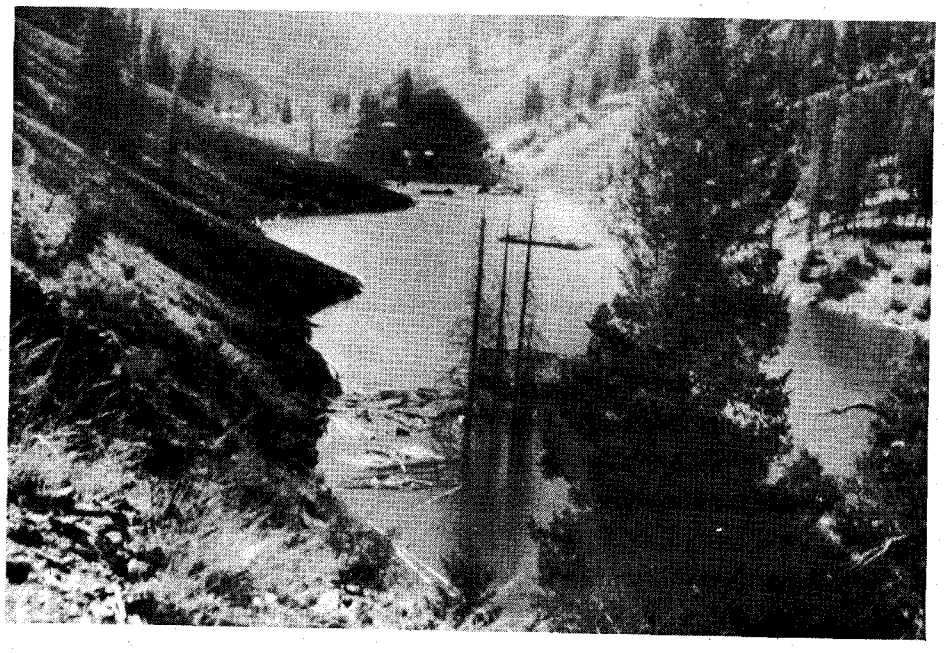
By ETHEL KIMBALL

Photos Courtesy Author



Zane Grey

Above, George Tagahashi, Zane Grey's Japanese cook, holds up a string of rainbow trout he caught at Williams Lake. Below, some of the old buildings in the flooded town of Roosevelt were still visible in 1931 when the Grey party took this photo. The lake lies at the foot of Thunder Mountain.



Below, "Cougar" Dave Lewis at his wilderness ranch on Pioneer Creek, sits his horse and visits with members of the Grey party. Creeks, mountains and other landmarks were named after this man who achieved fame through numerous cougar kills in the early days.

This seemed the perfect solution, and Elmer very gratefully accepted McBride's offer. He immediately notified Grey's party, and had the packers take their horses out near the Shoup ranch, about seven miles south of town, where the road ended and the mountain trail began.

It was here that Jerry Ravndal first met Zane Grey. And, because this is essentially Jerry's story, it will be told from here on in his own words, as he remembered the trip.

ZANE GREY was a pretty big man, nearing sixty years old, and had real dark eyes. Part Indian. The rest of the party included Zane's son Romer and his wife; Zane's daughter Betty and her husband Bob Carney (she divorced him later on and married again); Jack Frost,

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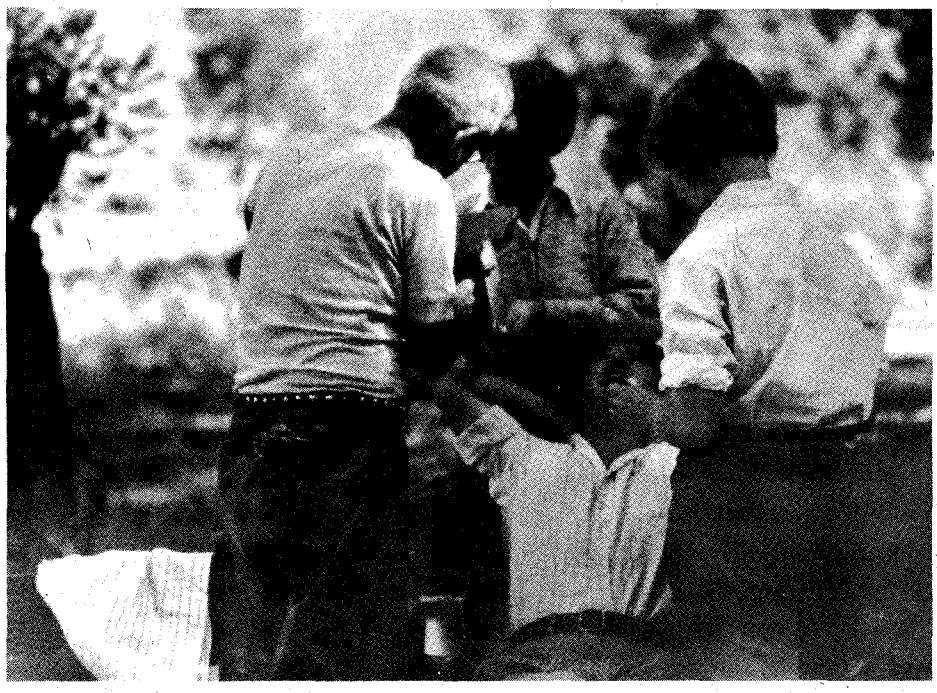


Zane Grey helps ease the pain of toothache for one of the party, assisted by his two stenographers. Grey had been a practicing dentist before writing became his career.

who was just a family friend; two of Zane's stenographers; his Japanese cook, Tagahashi; and a young couple from back East—can't remember their names.

We all went to work loading equipment and supplies onto the pack horses —I never saw so much stuff in my life as we had to take on that trip! And after we got everything all lined up, by gosh they hadn't figured out a horse for Zane to ride. Well, I had a buckskin that wasn't loaded yet, and he was gentle, so we decided to put Zane's gear on him. But I began to have my doubts as to whether he was the right horse when Zane started dragging out his huge, special saddle and fancy blankets and a bridle with one of those big old silver-mounted bits on it. I knew the buckskin wasn't used to that kind of rigging, but there was nothing else to do.

Finally we all got organized and headed out the trail, with me jerking my packstring and keeping an eye peeled on Zane. We got along fine for a-ways, but the buckskin hated that big bit and was getting more nervous all the time. I knew something had to be done before we started up the mountain to the lake. There was no other horse available, so the only alternative was to swap—and the only swap I could figure was to put Zane on Rainbow, the mare I was riding. I hadn't had the buckskin long enough to know what to expect of him, but I knew for dead sure that Rainbow could buck higher than a kite if something went wrong!

It was a choice between two evils, so I finally chose the lesser one and hollered to Zane, "Say, Mr. Grey, I think you'd better change horses with me. That buckskin is worrying too much."

He agreed fast, but as I watched him climb on Rainbow with his expensive clothes, beaded gloves and all the other stuff he wore, I said a kind of silent prayer. All the way up that steep, side-hilling trail I kept thinking, "Brother, if that mare don't buck him off!" Believe me, I was one happy guy when we got to the lake safe and sound.

We made two camps, one for them and another for us packers, but their's was sure a lot more elaborate. Tagahashi even had a special tent for cooking, and he reigned supreme in it. We rigged a big fly—sort of a canvas awning—over the doorway, which was a lot of protection against all kinds of weather.

I think I was prepared not to like Tagahashi, because I was a bit prejudiced against Japanese people—although I guess I had no real reason for being that way. But this little cook sure knocked my inborn dislike into a cocked hat. He was a great guy, and won me over real quick.

I also got to know the rest of the group while we were at the lake. Zane's daughter Betty was quite a gal. She seemed awfully young, and hadn't been married long. She was a good hand with horses, very friendly and pleasant, not at all stuck up, and before long I got the impression she was sort of picked on by some of the party.

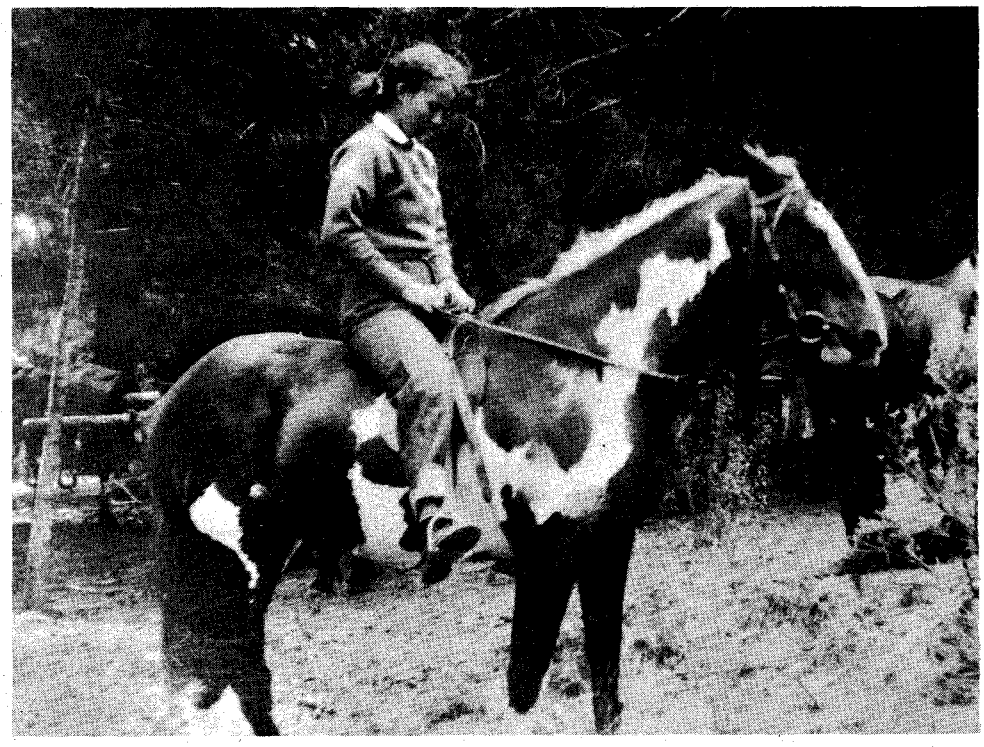
Jack Frost was a good guy, too. Together with Tagahashi, he helped keep peace in the bunch, which we soon found out was not an easy thing to do.

I got along fine with Zane, but he and some of the rest of the group grated on one another like bricks being rubbed together. He'd sit around the campfire at night, telling stories to us. They were really interesting, almost like reading one of his books. I especially liked the ones he told about the South Sea Islands, where they'd been on that yacht.

However, knowing what made him tick was an entirely different thing. I got the first inkling something was wrong when Con Mendonhall rode into our camp one evening after a long day of riding for cattle on the range in that area. Con had a ranch not far from the foot of the mountains, and since we had just finished eating supper, with plenty left over for a hungry friend, we naturally invited him to get off his horse and eat before he went on down the mountain.

None of us thought anything about Zane's having bought all the groceries. We just figured we had our own camp,

Betty Grey Carney on Paint at Williams Lake camp. She rode this pinto on the entire wilderness trip, which lasted about two months.



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did our own cooking, and western tradition has always demanded sharing with everyone. But while Con was eating, Zane came by and you didn't have to be a mind reader to know he didn't like the idea of our feeding someone else. He didn't say anything. You could just tell by looking at him! And that was the first indication of his distrusting his fellow man. He seemed to expect everyone to cheat him.

Con proved to be the exception, which tickled me no end. He ate with us a couple of times, and then one night here he came driving our horses in. They had gotten over the pass and were heading out of the country when Con spotted them while riding for cattle. Of course he recognized them, so he hazed them back for us. Western tradition had gone full circle!

AS A WHOLE, the party enjoyed itself at the lake, fishing or hiking or horseback riding. But they were the most jealous-hearted bunch I ever saw. For instance, one morning they were going out for a ride, and I had saddled the horses up the way they should be. Well, some of them got to thinking that somebody else had a better horse than they did, and could I change them around. So I changed them all around. And then I had to do it again. But that still wasn't what they wanted—and believe it or not, the third time I changed all of them they wound up saddled the way I first started out. And that suited them fine!

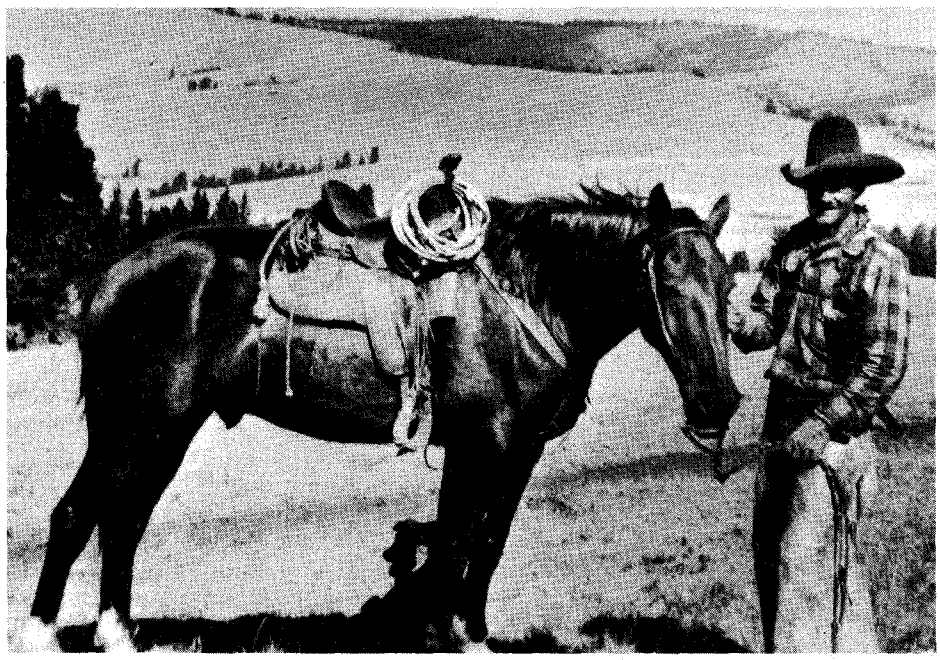
There was one horse they didn't argue about, though, and that was Paint, a little pinto mare of mine. She was kind of a nervous animal, but a darned good one, so after I saw how well Betty rode and handled horses, I told her, "Betty, if you will ride Paint yourself and not let anybody else at all on her, you can have her." She was very pleased, and rode that pinto during the whole trip as her exclusive property.

When it rained at last, we got word we'd be allowed to start the trip back into the Primitive Area. The young couple from the East decided they wouldn't go on with us, since their time was running short. That lessened the people and supplies we'd have to pack, but about that time Roy figured he had Elmer over a barrel and demanded more money to take his string of horses on into the back country. Elmer came to me with the news, saying, "If I don't pay him more, he'll quit right now."

"Let him quit!" I said, mad as a wet hen. "I'll pack the outfit!"

I sure knew I was biting off a mighty big chunk, but I don't like a welsher. Anyone who goes out for a price and then pulls something like that just doesn't rate very high with me. So Roy did quit, and I took over the entire packing job with twelve horses, Elmer's three, and Zane's one. Of course, I still wouldn't have any decisions to make as to where we went, where we camped or anything. That was Elmer's responsibility as outfitter and guide. My job was just to get us there and back.

To lessen the resulting confusion, Elmer hired two men with trucks to freight all of the equipment around the road to



Jerry Ravndal and his horse Brownie. Ravndal was one of two packers hired by Grey for the trip.

Meyers Cove, a two-day packtrip westward over the mountains from Williams Lake. This would be the take-off point for the rest of the journey. It was a rough, long way around by car, but it would be easier for the group and their gear to go that far on wheels.

"I'll go with the party," Elmer said, "and make arrangements to stay at Whitson's ranch [name is intentionally wrong] until you get there. Jack Frost has decided to go with you, and all you'll have to take is the pack rigging, your bedrolls and enough grub for the two of you. Both of you can eat at Whitson's when you get there."

Without delay, I started loading my horses with all the stuff, tents, grub, and the thousand other things they would take with them, knowing it would take a couple of days to get it all down to the trucks.

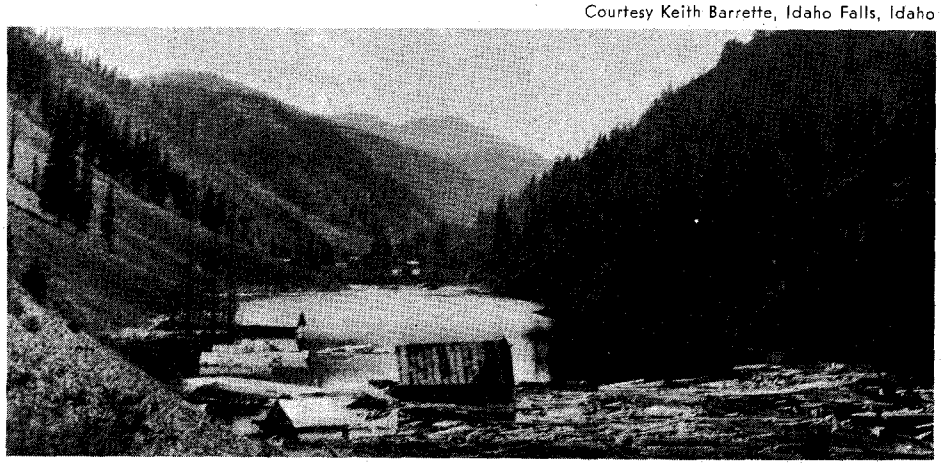
I'll never forget one particular load I put on a buckskin mare. They had a movie camera and two big metal suitcases full of reels of film, which made perfect side-packs on the decker, and the monstrous tripod with long legs in a leather case made a good top-pack to finish the load. I got it all lashed down, and started out with the string, driving the buckskin ahead instead of leading her.

Just as we started down the long ridge a short way from the lake, that tripod slipped ahead and poked the buckskin in the top of the neck and gouged her head. Boy, I'll tell you she unwound! There were packs flying in every direction. First one suitcase fell off, and when it hit the ground it flew wide open, spilling the reels out to go bouncing and jumping and splattering all down the hill. Naturally, all this commotion spooked the rest of the string, and it took some doing to get them all stopped and quieted down.

To make it worse, I knew that Zane had been almost ready to get on his horse and start down the trail when I left the lake. If he saw the mess I'd made of his movie reels he'd have a fit. Talk about hurry! I ran down and up and around

This is another view of the upper end of Roosevelt Lake believed taken before the 1931 Grey trip, showing the remains of the town of Roosevelt protruding above the water.

Courtesy Keith Barrette, Idaho Falls, Idaho



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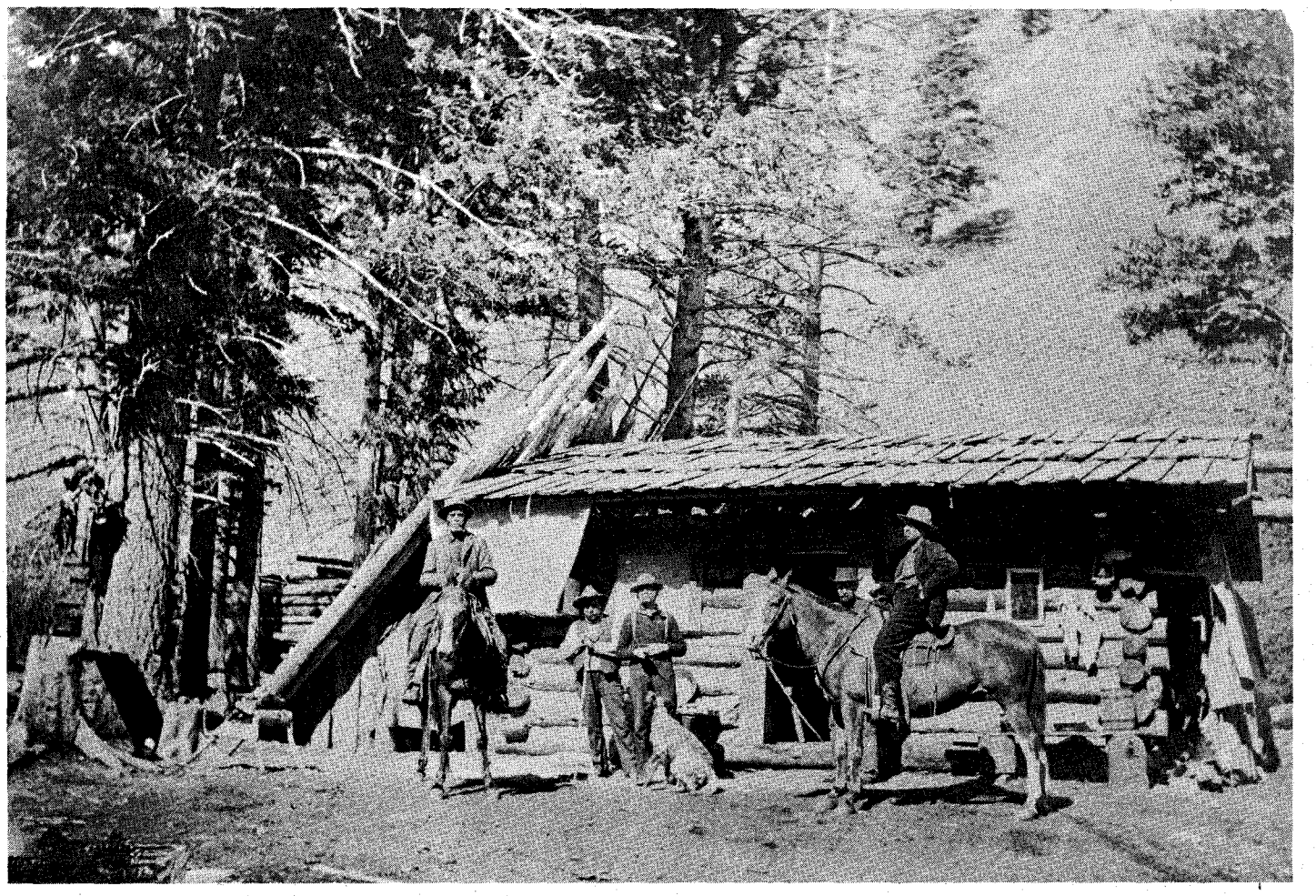

Courtesy Idaho Historical Society

A scene from by-gone days when mining ventures on Thunder Mountain were in full swing.

and over that ridge like a madman, packed them back into the metal suitcase and then packed the whole works back up to the trail and got the pack back on the buckskin so fast you couldn't believe it. And I got it done before Zane came down the trail. He didn't ever know it happened. I still don't know if I lost any reels or not!

AFTER the gang of them had gone, Jack Frost and I left the lake to start trailing the horses to Myers Cove. We climbed to the summit of the mountains and followed the ridge for a-ways before dropping down the west side to camp at Moyer Creek the first night. Bright and early the next day we were back on the trail, and made it about dark to Whitson's place near the mouth of Silver Creek. We were both beat. We'd pushed pretty hard, and were looking forward to a good home-cooked meal and some much needed rest.

We stopped in the flat below the house a-ways to start pulling the rigging off the horses, as hungry, dirty and tired as we could be. An old man came down from the ranch buildings to see what was going on, and we soon learned that the Grey party had already left. He said that two packers, named Crandall and Lowell, had taken two loads of stuff on down to what was called Bear Camp, on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

"I guess it's alright if you two stay here tonight," the man said—which sure brought a big sigh of relief from me! But I was happy too quick, because with his next breath he said, "You can go down there and camp anyplace in the flat."

There went our home-cooked meal and the rest of the comforts we'd been looking forward to. I was so disgusted I could hardly see straight. But there was nothing to do except go on unpacking the horses and get them turned loose so they could feed and rest. I remember I was walking along carrying a packsaddle to stack up on the pile, and I stepped into an old hoop off a barrel. It tipped up, and I caught my other toe in it and sprawled headlong on the ground. As I lit, my chin hit on that packsaddle, and I was mad anyway. If I hadn't been so big I'd have bawled. Or stayed down there and pounded the dirt with my fists!

The next day we got up to check on how much we had to pack on down to Bear Camp, and there was enough stuff to fill a freight train. We bowed our backs and started packing it up, loading every horse to the hilt. Finally there was only one horse left. It was the one Zane had bought from Fred Carl for one of his stenographers, and the only rigging left to put on it was Zane's big saddle, his very special saddle. As you might imagine, Zane's mare and saddle got used!

We left the mouth of Silver Creek, following on down Camas Creek to where it joined the Middlefork. We forded that stream, and turned down its western bank. When we got to Bear Camp and joined the party, it was dark and the end of a long, hard day for Jack and me. But I wished it was darker—in fact, I wished it was late enough that everybody had been asleep! As it was, Zane naturally saw us with this pack on his horse with his saddle the very first thing, and he didn't like it at all.

All we could do was pretend we didn't notice him too much, and start unpacking the string. It was pitch dark by then, with the sky overcast with clouds and a feeling of storm in the air. As if by signal everybody in that camp came over and pitched in to help me unload—and you never saw such a mess in your life. They'd just take a saddle off and drop it right there. Rigging was scattered all over the flat! It was impossible to see it all in the dark, so I just thought to heck with it, I'm not gonna gather it up tonight.

When we got ready to bed down, we were sure it would rain. Tagahashi had his kitchen set up with the fly out over it, and the other packers made bed under

(Continued on page 42)

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HE KILLED A CAGEY OUTLAW

—Old Snowdrift

By DORIS WHITHORN

Submitted by
THOMAS E. CLOSE

E. A. Close and Old Snowdrift.

Explanatory note: Those of you who save our magazines might like to refer to the April '72 issue in which "Grey Wolves and Buffaloes" appears. In this story the statement is made that Don Stevens, a government hunter, killed the famous "white" wolves Old Snowdrift and Lady Snowdrift in the 1920s. However, it appears that there was a later wolf also called Snowdrift which was killed by Al Close in May 1930. The picture we ran of Old Snowdrift was the last of the three which made up the famous trio of "white" wolves. Al Close's son, Thomas E. Close, brought this to our attention and secured Doris Whithorn's permission to print her 1965 interview with Al Close regarding this kill and two previous ones.

THE stories were told before. They were repeated with interest at the time. They were published in several papers and magazines in 1930. They were the stories of the white wolf. But they were not Al Close's story. They were the stories of the victim—not the victor!

Al was a rancher, hunter, trapper. He lived far from town. No reporter sought him out to get his story. But Al carefully saved the clippings of the tales as written from the stockmen's records, government trapper reports, and news offices. Then, in December 1962, Al Close's house at Emigrant on the Upper Yellowstone burned to the ground taking with it his clippings and his pictures.

His one photo of the famous kill had been copied, however, and this man, who had been robbed of all personal possessions two days before the holiday, found a copy of his old print tucked in his Christmas stocking. His sharing that photo had saved a precious possession. He was glad to tell again his story of how he killed the white wolf, how he had squeezed the trigger with the thought: "What a shame to kill such a smart fellow!" This is Al's story:

"I was living over in the Belt Mountains of central Montana. I had lived there quite a while and I knew the country pretty well. I had heard a lot about the white wolf. He was a renegade, but he was a clever killer. He could take down a two-year-old steer, take a feed off of it and turn it loose to live. He had killed thousands of dollars worth of cattle. During one six-weeks period he killed ten head of registered stock.

"That white wolf roamed the whole Judith Basin in the Belts. He defied trappers and he seemed to laugh at fellows who tried to poison or shoot him. He never ate off any kill unless he had made it himself. He never returned to it once he had left it.

"That wolf had a sixth sense about traps. I guess he could tell the difference in the smell of the steel. I swear he knew if a trap was cocked or not. He'd come to within thirty feet of a set one, even if it was buried in the snow or dirt. But he'd never get any closer. He'd walk right up to one that was sprung and use it for a fireplug.

"There were lots of ways he was smart. If he had a long way to go, he used the hardened surface of a well-packed road. He knew there wouldn't be any traps on them. He could make time. The Old Yogo Stage Trail—it wasn't used much by anybody besides the mail carrier—it went around the mountain and it suited his travels.

"Everybody got to know about the white wolf. Folks started offering rewards for his death. Over every bar and at every meeting, the reward money grew. The bounty was up to where responsible people had pledged about $1,700, but it wasn't down in cash. Then the Judith Basin Stockmen's Association was formed and it pledged $300. Individual ranchers, though, never kicked in their money. I got that $300 and a $100 bounty from the government—just $400. But I

(Continued on page 62)

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Boone Helm—Man Eater

(Continued from page 21)

Thomas Dimsdale laconically, "but the main witnesses were away when the trial took place, and the civil authorities were suspected of having substantial reasons for letting him escape."

Dimsdale tantalizingly says no more than that. Was he hinting at bribery and corruption in high places? Did Helm promise a share of Sokoloski's gold dust to some highly-placed officials if he were acquitted? Or was it perhaps hoped that Helm, if released, could be trailed to the spot where he had buried the $32,000? We shall never know.

What is clear, however, is that he spent the winter of 1862-63 on the loose in the Cariboo country and when spring came went south to resume his established career of banditry and murder.

In mid-January 1863, Boone Helm turned up in Olympia, Oregon, apparently free as a bird, and without any lawman on his tail. It was only his own stupidity in drawing attention to him that caused his arrest. The Portland *Oregonian* of 22 January reported that Helm had been apprehended by Sheriff Moxlie on a charge of disorderly conduct.

"He had been swaggering about town for some days, swearing that he would kill a man before he left town," the paper told its readers. "He was armed with two revolvers and a huge knife."

He was swiftly identified as the murderer of Dutch Fred, and the following day the paper noted that Helm had been remanded to the Olympia jail on this murder charge and "will be retained until he can be taken to Florence for trial."

Boone Helm, however, had other ideas. He did not tarry long, for he had no intention of standing in court to answer a murder charge. Subsequently he boasted: "I was confined in jail in Oregon, and dug my way out with tools given me by my squaw." Early in April he broke out, stole a horse and headed north towards the Canadian border again, outdistancing the posse on his heels. He ran into Jack Splawn down near the United States-Canada border and sold him a grey horse. Helm claimed to have trained the horse personally and told Splawn that "he had eluded a posse for seven days" on it, though the animal was worn down.

"The horse was windbroken, but alert and active as a cat," Splawn said. "If he heard another horse on the trail, he told me, never would he call to horsekind. When his bridle was removed that he might graze, he would come as fast as he could to me, if I whistled."

THUS having raised a stake, Helm was ready to head for the $32,000. While passing through the town of Sumas he met up with another old acquaintance, though one he had met under rather different circumstances, in the person of W. T. Collinson.

"He was along with a pack train owned by Dan Harris (alias Dirty Harris), at one time owner of the major part of the town-site of Fairhaven," Collinson recalled. "Helm was on his way to get the dust hid at Quesnelle and next day I got on my way to intercept Helm at Yale, but the marshal from Port Townsend was there and took him from Yale to Port Townsend on a charge of murder."

Collinson, who appears to have held some kind of law enforcement commission at this time, went on to say that Boone Helm "dug out of the Townsend jail and made his way to the hills."

He was free for only a few days, for on May 1, the Victoria *Colonist* reported with great satisfaction that he had "been arrested by the British authorities at Fort Yale on the Fraser River, and handed over in due form to the custody of a Mr. Brandian, a special officer sent across for the purpose by the U.S. authorities, who has brought the prisoner to Victoria, and lodged him in our jail."

This time, vigilance was exercised and Boone Helm was shortly to find himself back in Florence, charged with the murder of Dutch Fred. No chances were being taken this time, because at last he was recognized for the dangerous man he was, and accordingly was heavily shackled. Pioneer newspaperman Wells Drury saw Helm during these days and considered it a high spot to record in his autobiography many years later. "Boone Helm, the most desperate of the bad-men of the Northwest, I had seen led captive in irons."

In the meantime, Boone Helm's brother "Tex," who was working some highly successful diggings at Boise, heard of Boone's trouble and hurried to his aid.

"He made his appearance in Florence with a heavy purse," Nathaniel Langford reported. "He soon satisfied himself that unless the testimony could be suppressed, the trial must end in conviction; and to this object he immediately addressed himself. Some of the witnesses had left the country. 'Tex' succeeded in buying up all that remained, except one. He wanted an extravagant sum. 'Tex' finally agreed to pay it, if he would at once leave the country and never return. The extortionist accepted the conditions."

Boone Helm was acquitted due to lack of evidence, He came clear, as Thomas Dimsdale put it, "from the meshes of the law," and went back to Boise with his

William F. Drannan wrote about his observations of the vigilante action in Virginia City, including the hanging of Boone Helm.

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Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Virginia City, Montana, no date provided.

brother. Tex wanted him to stay and help with the mine, but Boone was restless and at last his brother suggested that he go to Texas. He reminded Boone that he had been heading for Texas back in 1851 when he killed Littlebury Shoot, but had gone to California instead. The Civil War was now in its second year and Boone Helm frequently voiced strong Confederate sympathies, such as one might expect from a Missourian. In Texas he could join one of the regiments there who were fighting for the Confederacy. When his brother promised to equip him for the journey, and give him sufficient funds, Boone agreed to go.

Tex never saw Boone again, though he soon learned that his brother had not gone to Texas as promised. He was dead within a year in Alder Gulch and Tex, who had beggared himself bribing witnesses for Helm's past crimes, was also dead within two years, following a bad throw from a horse at Walla Walla in 1865.

INSTEAD of Texas, Boone Helm first headed back to Portland and was soon in trouble again, though initially not of his own making.

The adventure, because it took place in the remote Rogue River Valley country, was not known to Nathaniel Langford or anyone else in Montana until some eight years after Helm's death. Langford, in the fall of 1872, was in Salt Lake City on business and one evening was spent at the Townsend House talking over the old days with Governor Woods and some friends. A stranger—Langford did not give his name—overheard them mention Boone Helm and butted into their conversation.

He had known Helm all too well and told Langford and Woods about his experiences. The Stranger (as Langford called him) explained that he had started out as a farmer, but had been ruined by a particularly severe winter which killed off all his crops. He re-established himself as a cattle raiser and trailed a small herd into Oregon's Rogue River Valley, selecting a spot some thirty-six miles west of the Old California Trail, up in the Siskiyou Mountains near the Coquillas River. He built a stockaded home, just in case of Indian attack, installed a library, of which he was extremely fond, and settled down. One day, while out hunting, he heard what he thought was the noise of an animal trapped in the undergrowth.

"I peered cautiously in the direction from within the shadow of a pine, and saw, to my surprise, a man half concealed in the thicket, watching me," The Stranger said. "Who are you?" he demanded, bringing up his rifle.

"I am a white man in distress," the figure called to him in English.

He saw "a shrunken, emaciated form, half naked, and nearly famished," when the figure rose from the thicket. "A more pitiable object I never beheld," he said.

The man explained how he had come into the area. "My name is Boone Helm," he said. "I am the only survivor of a company which, together with the crew and vessel, were lost on the coast ten days ago. We were bound for Portland from San Francisco, and were driven ashore in a storm. I escaped by a miracle, and have wandered in the mountains ever since, feeding on berries, and sleeping under the shelter of rocks and bushes. I came in this direction, hoping to strike the California Trail and fall in with a pack train." Helm then gave a detailed account of the shipwreck.

"My sympathies were enlisted, and I conducted him to my home, sharing 'bed and board' with him for a month or more," The Stranger told Langford. "He recruited in strength rapidly. I found him genial and intelligent, though uneducated. He was an agreeable talker, and told a story with an enchanting interest. By shreds and patches he disclosed much of his personal history, occasionally dropping a word or expression which led me to believe he had been a great criminal and more than once imbrued his hands in the blood of his fellow man. He remained with me for a month or more, long enough to make the prospect of separation painful, though I felt that I would be better off without than with him. When he left, I gave him a good buckskin suit, a cap, a pair of moccasins, and a gun. He wrung my hand at departure, expressing the warmest gratitude."

At first The Stranger missed his guest, but he plunged back into the reading which he so enjoyed and which had been abandoned for the past weeks, and was soon happy again. One day he was surprised to hear the sound of a horse's hoofs. An attractive woman was riding up to his house. She said that she had come to warn him of great danger.

THE WOMAN, who refused to give her name, explained that she sold stationery throughout the California mining camps, and wrote letters for pay on behalf of illiterate miners. While at Yreka, from whence she had come, she had stayed in a boarding house and overheard a conversation.

"One evening after a day of more fatiguing labor than usual, I returned early but could not sleep," she told The Stranger. "While tossing upon the pillow, I heard two men enter the adjoining room and engage in earnest conversation. I could hear distinctly every word they uttered, and the subject they were discussing very soon riveted my attention. They were planning a murder and robbery. In the midst of their conversation, another man entered, whom they saluted by the name of Boone Helm. He seemed to be their leader, for he proceeded at once to describe the home and surroundings of the intended victim, said he had been there and shared his hospitality for several weeks; spoke of the road leading there, the trail from the road to the house, and the distance, of the large herd of cattle, and the ready sale for them at Yreka.

"'We cannot,' said he, 'make more money in a shorter time, with greater ease, and less liability to detection, than to go there and dispose of the man and take his property.'

"They finally agreed that at a certain time the three should go in company, and execute their murderous design. I immediately determined to foil them in their bloody purpose, or lose my life in the attempt. . . . I have ridden more than two hundred miles to warn you of your danger. Be on your guard. Make every preparation to defend yourself, for as sure as the time comes, the men will be here to take your life."

The woman refused to stay, insisting on heading back for Yreka after a meal.

"The next day I made every needful preparation for defense, and calmly awaited the arrival of the ruffians," The Stranger said. "In the afternoon on the day my informant mentioned I saw them approaching, one, whom I recognized as

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Helm, half a mile or more in advance of the other two. I stood in the gate of my stockade with my revolver in my belt and, as he approached me, greeted him kindly, bade him enter, and closed and bolted the door behind him. As this had always been my custom, he did not notice it. I saw at once, by his subdued, churlish manner, and his crabbed style of address, that he was bent upon mischief. Hardly waiting for an exchange of common civilities, he said,

"'Lend me your pistols. I am going on a perilous expedition.'

"'I cannot spare them,' I replied.

"'But you must spare them. I want them.'

"'I tell you I cannot let you have them.'

"Flying into a passion, he with bitter oaths rejoined,

"'I'll make you give 'em to me, or I'll kill you,' at the same time grasping his revolver.

"Before he could pull it from its scabbard, I had mine leveled with deadly aim at his head, and my finger on the trigger.

"'Make a single motion,' I said emphatically, 'and I will shoot you.'

"He quailed, for he saw I had the advantage of him. His comrades now approached the gate from without.

"'Break down the door,' he shouted and, adding an opprobrious epithet, ordered them to kill me.

"Still holding my pistol level with his temple, I replied sternly,

"'If they attempt such a movement, I will kill you instantly.'

"He knew me to be desperately in earnest, and, taking the hint, told them to go away. They obeyed.

"'Now, sir,' I persisted, still holding him under fire, 'unbuckle and drop your belt, pistol, and knife, and walk from there, so that I can get them.'

"He begged, but I was inexorable. He tried to throw me off my guard by referring pleasantly to our former acquaintance, and assuring me he was only jesting, and would not harm me for the world. I told him I had been warned of his coming and its object, and detailed with some particularity the conversation he had with his companions at the time they agreed upon the expedition. He stoutly denied it, and demanded the source of my information. Knowing that he was ignorantly superstitious, I gave him to understand that it was entirely providential. For a moment he seemed dumbfounded and, hardened as he was in crime, showed by his action that he believed it.

"I made him sit down and kept him in range of my revolver all night, conversing with him, meantime, on such subjects as were best calculated to win his confidence. The night seemed a year in duration, but he told me his entire history—his birth, the errors of his early manhood, his first and only love, the illness and death of his betrothed, his resolution to lead a criminal life, his murder of Shoot, his escape, and many other murders that he afterwards committed, and of his intention to murder me and dispose of my cattle. I never heard or read a more horrible history than that narrated by this man of blood. He lost no opportunity to throw me off guard, but I knew too well what would be the result. He was my prisoner, under absolute control, as long as his life was in my power.

"Morning came. Helm's companions were still lingering near the stockade. I ordered them to withdraw a certain distance, that I might with safety release my prisoner. I then opened the gate, and with my double-barrelled shotgun leveled upon him, bade him go, assuring him that if we ever met again I would shoot him on sight. He marched out and away with his comrades."

Another hanging several years after Helm's "departure," that took place in Helena, Montana on April 30, 1870. Note that only one rope was used to hang both victims.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

IN THE summer of 1863, fresh from devilishness elsewhere, Boone Helm drifted into Virginia City, a newly established shanty settlement centered around the gold diggings in Alder Gulch in what was then Idaho Territory. Bannack City was some eighty miles away and a whole host of other settlements such as Nevada, Pine Grove, Fairweather and Junction Summit were dotted along the gulch.

Helm had always preyed on miners in the goldfields and in Alder Gulch he was in his element. Crime there was organized on a scale never seen in the West up to that time. Even the darkest days of San Francisco in the 1850s—finally broken up by Vigilante action—had been nothing like it. Sheriff Henry Plummer, who Boone Helm may well have known previously, for they were both in the Salmon River country at the same time, was masterminding a large band of outlaws and bandits. His underlings frequently participated in armed robberies and his appointed deputies, Haze Lyons, Buck Stinson and Charlie Forbes, had openly shot down the honest chief deputy, a man named Dillingham, who had been elected by the local miners. They were tried in a miner's court, but went free after a controversial vote by all those present. The gang had a series of hideouts and several shady lawyers, who virtually acted as early-day public relations officers when needed. They also had an assortment of paid informers who tipped them off when shipments of gold dust were to be carried by stagecoach, or, more often, when miners who had struck it rich were leaving the area.

Fresh murders and robberies always brought a wave of indignation from the honest citizens, but nothing was ever done about them. Sheriff Plummer and his men pretended to be baffled by the

(Continued on page 46)

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

ATTENTION

We do not handle the books reviewed below. If interested in purchasing, please check your local bookstore, or address your order to the individual publisher in care of this office and we will be glad to forward. Be sure to make your check payable to the publisher of the book, not to us.

INDIAN ART FORM

Based on historical, artistic, and technical information *The Navajo Blanket* (Praeger Publishers, $10.00) by Mary Hunt Kahlenberg and Anthony Berlant and with a foreword by Laura Gilpin is a significant reference on a unique American art form. It points out the artistic creativity of the American Indian. Navajo blankets are diligently sought by collectors and artists. The book is beautifully illustrated with full-page color and designs in the work of eighty-one Navajo women in the nineteenth century. Sixteen color and eighty-one black and white illustrations illustrate the influence of various Indian, Spanish and American cultures. In her foreword Laura Gilpin states, "This exhibition of Navajo blankets is still a pioneering effort in securing art museum recognition of the Indian's artistic achievements." Collector, artist, student, or buff, this book is a must. It may even be an opportunity for many to appreciate more fully Navajo blankets—they are becoming too expensive for many who love them to acquire.

HIKING GUIDE

The growing popularity of hiking and back-packing as forms of outdoor recreation will be accelerated by such guides as *100 Southern California Hiking Trails* (Touchstone Press, $5.95) by Don and Roberta Lowe. This paperback describes 100 trails of varied length and difficulty, representing a broad diversity of scenic attractions. The four categories are Los Padres National Forest and Vicinity, Southwestern California, Sierra Nevada-Western Approach, and Sierra Nevada-Eastern Approach. All trails are located on a large sub-state map for location in relation to access roads. Each trail is concisely described, including physical and biological features, distance, elevation, time allowance, open seasons, and identification on the U. S. Geological Survey Topographic map. A landscape photograph adds visual description to the narrative. An excellent guide for the area covered.

LEAD DOG

General Red: The Story of the Hound Who Led the Pack Against Bear and Cougar (Jenkins Publishing Co., $5.50) by O. A. Washburn will find enthusiastic readers among dog lovers and hunters. Primarily a northern New Mexico rancher and hunter, the author formerly taught school and served as a U. S. Forest Service fire lookout. The central character in this book of true experiences is the lead hunting dog, Red, who treed many bears, lions and bobcats but between hunts was a neighborhood moocher and pest. A part-time professional guide, Washburn led his customers on many successful hunts in the Chama River basin. One of his biggest problems was keeping peace with neighbors because of nuisance pranks played by his sharp-nosed lead dog. After being saturated once by skunk spray, the author found a sure-fire descenter provided by a friend's wife. Her treatment made men and dogs again socially acceptable. The riskiest experience came when Blackburn and dogs ridded a mine tunnel of a mountain lion that had put the miners on the run. Red found the lion which killed several of the dog pack, and the author and a companion shot the big cat.

TOMBSTONE

In *Tombstone, Myth and Reality* (Oxford University Press, $7.50) author Odie B. Faulk torpedoes the fiction and tells the true story of Arizona's famous mining town. Through the over-imaginative writings of Stuart Lake and others, aided by repeated exaggerated Hollywood movies, the OK Corral caper has become the epic western gunfight and Wyatt Earp the leading hero of the American morality play. Crooks such as the Earp and Clanton gangs played small roles in Tombstone history compared with that of the major population of miners who sweated ten hours a day in the mines and who were responsible for building schools, churches and businesses. The real hero was Ed Schieffelin, the dogged prospector who located the Tombstone riches and together with partners and financiers turned the land into a bonanza. There was violence in Tombstone where riff-raff congregated on the heels of the miners. Indian and Mexican raiders were a problem too, but hell-raising was a minor issue compared with the greater issue of milling rich ores, a feature that Faulk handles extremely well. Very good.

NEW MEXICO HOMES

Old Houses of New Mexico and the People Who Built Them (Calvin Horn, $10.00) by Sytha Motto is the result of ten years of searching for information about famous homes and their builders. Romantic, eccentric, and artistic are the terms which characterize the attributes of the builders and the resulting architectural styles. Often more stylish than functional, some houses built well over a hundred years ago still stand. But as time advances, more and more of these creations of the past are disappearing. Sytha Motto tells how people lived in the early days of New Mexico and relates such events to their homes, churches and public buildings. The author includes much detail regarding structural design and building materials. Different homes are related to the architectural styles they represent. This book is not only valuable for its historical content, but it is a technical reference for students of architecture. The human interest stories of individuals and families adds warmth and interest to the book. To complete such magnificent structures under primitive conditions where materials often were hauled for hundreds of miles by ox cart is a tribute to the early New Mexicans' fortitude.

LUMMIS FOR THE DEFENSE

Charles F. Lummis, dean of the Southwest's pioneer sponsors, journalist, book author and a founding member of the Sierra Club, had a profound influence on Indian freedom and independence. *Bullying the Moqui* (Prescott College Press, $7.50) edited by Robert Easton and Mackenzie Brown, presents the Lummis defense of the Hopi Indians with an account of his association with President Theodore Roosevelt. The book contains pages of his violent crusade against the Indian agent and schoolteachers responsible for abusing Indian men, women and children while enforcing their own versions of U. S. education and culture. This violated Hopi customs of dress, traditional religion, and mode of daily living. Through his influence on President Roosevelt and many other leaders, an important start was made toward more lenient treatment and better understanding of Indians, their culture and needs. Adding to the value of the book are several contemporary photographs and an instructive introduction by the authors.

FOUR CENTS A SECTION

Louisiana Purchase, The Story of the Biggest Real Estate Deal in History (Crown, $4.95) is by Donald Barr Chidsey, an author who deserves high marks for astute historical reporting and pungent literary style. In linking up the series of frustrating events that several times nearly destroyed the young nation reeling on wobbly legs, Chidsey reveals the succession of miracles that steadied the country's progress and saved it. Finally finessing the purchase of the French Louisiana Territory for four cents per square mile, Thomas Jefferson opened up the Mississippi to U. S. river commerce so long blocked by the Spanish, French and English. Expertly described are feverish westward migrations of whites, Indians forced out of their tribal lands, huge land swindles, harassment by the English, the flaking off of the gilt of Spanish imperialism, the Aaron Burr and General Wilkinson plans for secession, and the battle against the English for New Orleans. Very good.

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IT'S GOT OLD HOSSTAIL DANGLING IN A PAINFUL POSITION...

We mean the increasing postal rates on magazines—going up as much as 150% in some cases. These additional charges and regulations that make handling and mailing costlier and slower are downright painful to all publishers. They've hurt some magazines—some of the really big ones—so bad they've had to go out of business. So we're asking our readers (FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME) for a little help with the mailing expenses. All issues shown here are 50¢ plus 25¢ postage and handling. We can mail a bundle cheaper, and will gladly pass that savings on to you. FOR THIS SPECIAL BARGAIN, order all 12 magazines for only $6.00 and we'll ship 'em POSTPAID.

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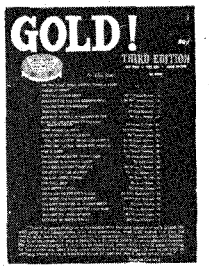
GOLD! #2



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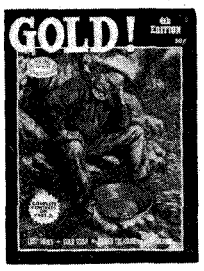

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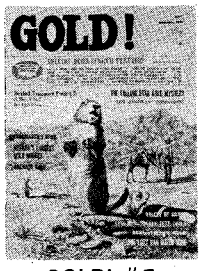

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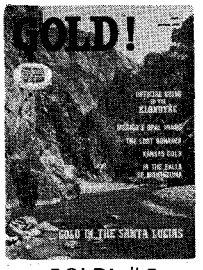
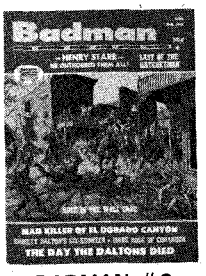


GOLD! #6

BADMAN #1

BADMAN #2



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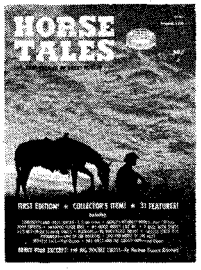
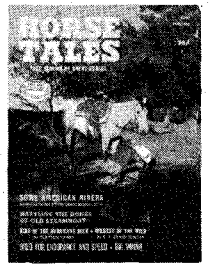


HORSE TALES #1



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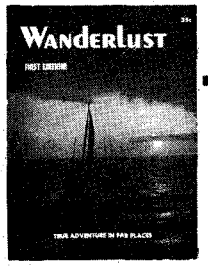

WANDERLUST #1

SPECIAL ANNUALS

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Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

Roberts

My mother's grandfather, Joseph Almar Roberts (born January 1840, died March, 1925), left a wife and children in Illinois. He was born in Fremont, Cedar County, Missouri. He came to Texas after his discharge from the army in 1865 and married my great-grandmother, Henrietta Frietag on May 4, 1867. They had nine children. Two are still living, ages eighty-one and eighty-five.

Joseph received letters from his abandoned wife asking him to come home to her and the children.

On his application for pension, his answer to the question, "Are you living with your wife, or has there been a separation?" he answered. "I am a liven whit my onle wife I ever had."

I would like to hear from any of his descendants.—Mrs. Lewis E. Reece, 613 North Loop, Austin, Texas 78751

Wiley

I am looking for information about my grandfather, James Louis Wiley, born 1830 and died March 1887. He was a soldier for the Union Army during the Civil War. By his first wife, he had a son named Tom. He married again to Anne Furgerson or Ferguson. They had six children: John, Susan (my mother), Dick, George, Maggie and Francis.

James Wiley owned land in Crockett County, Texas at the time of his death. It is now known as the James Wiley tract. All his children were born in Coryell County. James died in Coke County and is buried in the old cemetery on the Hill Ranch, three miles west of Watervalley, Texas. His is the only grave in the old cemetery with a stone for a marker. He was an Indian scout and buffalo hunter. James had a brother, Charles, and a sister, Matilda. I believe there were other brothers and sisters.—Mrs. Jeff Martin, 2445 S.W. 29th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73119

Rapp

I would like to hear from anyone who may have any information of my brother Walter Rapp. The last I heard of him was in 1916 when he was herding sheep near Shoshone, Wyoming. He also had a homestead and was a hunter's guide.

I would also appreciate hearing from anyone who served in World War II with my son, Samuel Rapp. I received a telegram that he was killed in action, however no body was ever found.—Henry Rapp, 968 Sherman Street, Sturgis, South Dakota 57785

Turtle-Jacobson

Would like to contact descendants of Mrs. Eliza Turtle. She lived in or around Salem, Oregon from 1909 to 1916. Am also interested in Mr. Jacobson who was at the County Poor Farm at Salem, Oregon from 1921 to 1923.—Carl I. Stockford, Route 1, Box 247, Silverton, Oregon 97381

Atwater

I would like to find any relatives of Thomas Lyman Atwater, son of Charles and Jane Atwater. Thomas was born in 1850 in Fulton County, Illinois and lived around Abingdon. He married Margaret Arminda Pointer in 1871. I have a letter I found, from a Julius L. Atwater, brother of his, from Grand Prairie, Texas, that was written back in the early 1920s. He mentioned a sister Mary Ann, a cousin Lyman Atwater, and that Manda Clark was staying with them that particular winter.

I don't know if they had brothers named Scott and John, but they were mentioned in this letter. He also said he had a daughter who lived a hundred miles from Grand Prairie and another one in Dallas, Texas. He said he had six grandchildren, three boys and three girls.

He also mentioned a Caroline. I think that was Grandfather's sister but I never knew her last name. I would enjoy hearing from anyone who knew of any of these people. I've heard my mother speak of everybody in the letters but never met any of them.—Mrs. Verna L. Benson, 1067 Lincoln Street, Galesburg, Illinois 61401

Hudsons of Texas

I wish to correspond with anyone of the Hudson name whose ancestors settled in the vicinity of Rhome or Newark in present Wise County, Texas. Legend has it that my great-great-grandfather, James Hudson, of Adair and Russell Counties, Kentucky had three sons who went to California during the gold rush and returned to this area of Texas and settled. One's name may have been James and one possibly was William. I have much information which I will gladly share in return for information on these Texas Hudsons.

A brother, or half-brother, of these three later was in Honey Grove, Texas and Pilot or Pecan Point, Texas. His name is said to have been Robert (Robert Daniel?) Hudson. Does anyone know this man's descendants?

James Hudson of Adair County, Kentucky was originally from Virginia. I would greatly appreciate hearing from any Texas Hudsons who may be descendants of my Kentucky family.—James T. Hudson, Route 3, Box 139A, Columbia, Kentucky 42728

Whorley (Worley)

I would like to correspond with any relatives named Whorley (Worley). My great-grandfather, Charles Whorley, and his family came with Daniel Boone on his first wagontrain trip to Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap. He was married two or three times and is said to have had twenty-seven children from these marriages. I am interested in his last wife and would appreciate any information.—Charlotte Alldredge, 706 A Water Street, Grayville, Illinois 62844

Bates-Lewis

I would like any information on my maternal grandmother's family. She was Daisey Olive Bates, born October 12, 1888 at Thayer, Missouri. Her mother's maiden name was Marena (May) Lewis. Marena had at least three sisters: Laura,

(Continued on page 68)

"Maybe they'll be too tired to attack after they finish dancing!"

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Wild Old Days!

Photo Courtesy Author

Dudley L. Bristow (see arrow) and friends pose with the kill.

BIG GAR

By Lela Bristow Tadlock

VERY FEW GARS have been caught in any other stream in the country as large as the one caught by my father in White River near Batesville, Arkansas in 1896. It weighed 180 pounds.

A gar, or garfish as they are sometimes called, is a long-bodied fish with a sharp snout and wicked teeth. To the fisherman he is a pest, taking other fish off of trotlines and eating them. The flesh of the gar is coarse grained and in some instances strong tasting; it is not very good for food.

Many of the older citizens of Batesville have heard my father, the late D. L. Bristow who was for many years a commercial fisherman, tell of capturing the monster and have seen the picture of the gar and its captors.

Several big fish were being caught in White River that spring. Papa had lost a lot of hooks from his trotlines, apparently taken by fish too large for the lines to hold. He decided to make a special effort to catch some of the big ones, especially the ones that had been taking the biggest hooks and the largest bait. He bought a new trotline, strung it with extra large hooks on stout cord, and baited the hooks with small perch. He put the line out in Burr Eddy, just below the government lock and dam.

The next morning on his way from his home in Batesville to run his line, he overtook Mr. Dugger who published the local newspaper. Mr. Dugger was going fishing too, and when he learned about the line Papa had put out, he expressed a desire to go along and see if any big ones had been caught. They walked together to the river where Papa's boat was tied to a tree on the riverbank.

They got into the John boat and Papa paddled to the place where he had tied the end of his trotline to a stout sapling. The sapling was shaking so hard that Papa knew something of considerable size and strength was on the other end.

A few feet from the end of the line he found an eighty-pound catfish. Getting the fish off of the hook and into the boat caused it to rock so violently that Mr. Dugger begged to be taken to the bank so he could get out, but Papa knew there was something bigger and stronger yet on the line and that he must get it before he turned the line loose.

As Papa pulled the boat along toward the middle of the river and farther along the line, Mr. Dugger continued to beg to be taken ashore but Papa was too busy to oblige him. He had his hands more than full with the biggest gar he had ever seen.

JOHNNY JONES, who was a good friend of Papa and a fellow fisherman, saw the struggle from where he was running a trotline some distance away, and came over to assist. Several other men were attracted to the scene. One of them had a shotgun in his boat and Papa asked to borrow it. He shot the gar three times before it ceased to fight and the men able to get it into the boat.

Papa then ran his line on to its end and got some smaller fish before he paddled to the bank and let Mr. Dugger out. The publisher declared that, in spite of his fright, he had had more fun than he had experienced in a long time. The next week's Batesville *Bee* had a story

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about the fishing trip that filled almost an entire column.

After Papa and Johnny Jones had taken care of their other fish, they tied the great gar to a pole and carried it the half-mile from the river, through town and to a store where they weighed it. It tipped the scales at 180 pounds.

A photographer came out of his studio as they were passing and snapped a picture of the big fish, its captors, and the crowd of curious citizens who had gathered to see the biggest gar known to have been caught in White River. The holes from the shotgun blasts were plainly visible in the gar's side when the photos were developed.

Gar were greatly feared at that time by swimmers. A story is told of a group of boys swimming in an eddy near where the big gar was captured. There was a little Negro boy in the group and, as was the custom, he had to stay away off to himself at the outskirts of the pool. The other boys heard a scream as the little Negro child disappeared, never to be seen again. There was a patch of bloody bubbles where he had been swimming. The boy's name was Dean and henceforth the place was known as the Dean Swimming Hole. It was pointed out to later generations but I never knew of anyone swimming in that place.

THE GAMLIN CABIN

By Allye Terrell

A SMALL CABIN under the overlapping branches of the California Big Trees in Sequoia National Park is the offspring of some companion trees that lived nearly a century ago.

It was built by Thomas and Israel Gamlin, brothers, who came from Vermont in 1868. They filed on a 160-acre grazing claim, and this "ranch" would take care of their cattle but where would they find shelter? It was a little-known area of bitter winters.

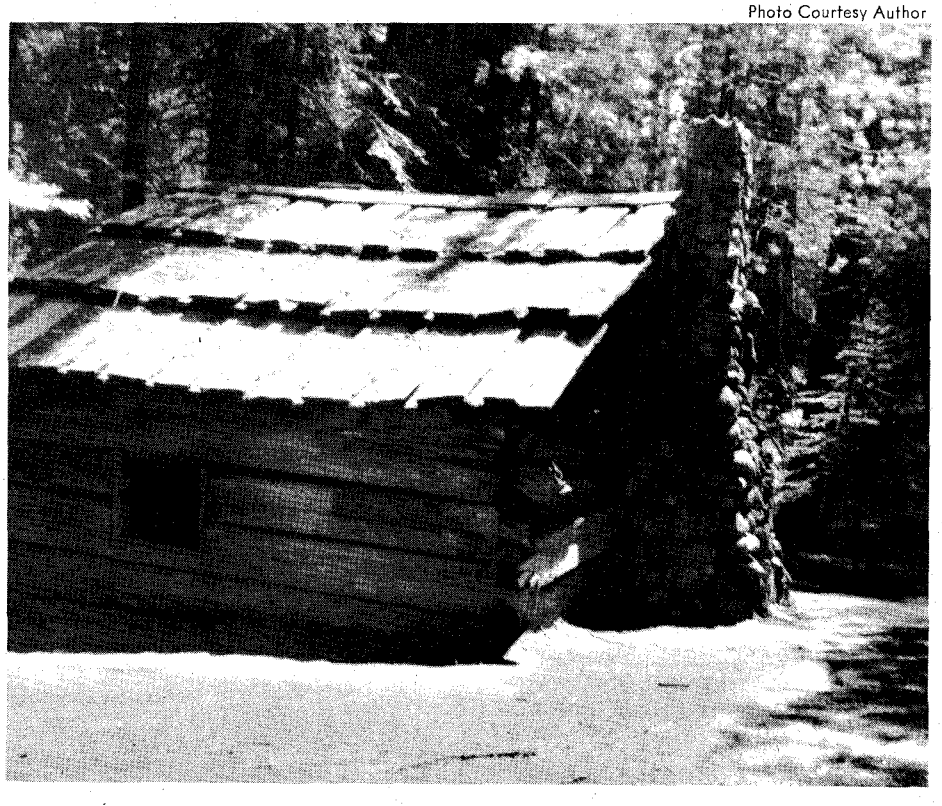
The Gamblins had seen a huge fallen tree on one of their explorations. Totally unaware that this would eventually come to be known as the famous "Fallen Monarch," they decided to seek its snug protection. It has been estimated that the giant tree stood 450 feet high and had a diameter of 40 feet at the base. Records say it had been hollowed out by fire set by lightning. Enough of it had been left, however, to make a comfortable living space for the brothers for four years, after which they used the rough lumber at hand and put up a 26′ by 20′ cabin. Here they lived until 1878, and the lumber is still durable after all these years.

The cabin is one of the attractions for hundreds of park visitors every summer. When they come upon the "Father of the Forests," they pause to read the message on the plate: "Follow the loop trail leading to General Grant Tree, then proceed around the bend. You will climb an unmistakable rise to reach the Gamlin Cabin." Unmistakable rise is an understatement about the climb, especially for older visitors, but it is well worth a few extra puffs. As you peer through the semi-light you are surprised at the sturdy appearance of the little building. Two small openings served as windows; heavy double doors, each three feet wide, still swing open on crude iron hinges. The fireplace, made of native stones, fills a big part of one end of the cabin. It is easy to visualize the two woodsmen cooking a meal of wild game on a fire made of now-precious redwood. A thick slab of wood was used as a mantle over the fireplace. The clapboard roof still looks capable of turning the heavy rains that fall in the forest.

After the Gamlins had gone, the cabin became a storehouse for the U.S. Cavalry after the park was established in 1890. They left in 1913. Since then, park rangers—a couple of generations of them—have been grateful for the protection from chilling winds and drifting snow which the lone cabin provided while they were quartered in it.

The 95-year-old Gamlin cabin in Sequoia National Park, California.

Photo Courtesy Author



TRAPPED THROUGH A KODAK LENS

By Agnes Wright Spring

COWBOY Lee Hamblet of Tierra Amarillo, New Mexico Territory, defied the law and its officers, successfully stood off territorial militia, and for several years evaded arrest as a murderer. But he was brought down at long last through the lens of an amateur photographer's kodak.

Lee Hamblet grew up in a part of New Mexico where, before the turn of the century, there was an unwritten law that sheepherders must not drive their flock onto cattle ranges. When some sheep herders did drive several thousand head of sheep into pastures used by Hamblet and his cattlemen friends, there was trouble. A Mexican herder was killed. The other herders, also Mexicans, went for help and returned shortly with reinforcements. After setting fire to the ranch house in which the cowboys took refuge, they fired through the windows and, according to the local press, "acted like demons generally."

Lee Hamblet shot three of the attacking force and in the middle of the night dashed from the ranch house, obtained a horse, and rode to Farmington, thirty miles away, for help. He was shot at and wounded, but kept going and reached Farmington safely.

Gathering a number of farmers from the San Juan and Las Animas Valleys, Hamblet rode back at top speed toward the beleaguered ranch house. The Mexican herders took to their heels, but were pursued. When the shooting was over, three more herders—and possibly a fourth—had paid with their lives.

Since some of the dead herders were kin to the most powerful families in the Territory, their relatives demanded vengeance. They particularly wanted Lee Hamblet brought to justice. Hamblet, however, refused to surrender. He had many friends who protected him, and local officers did not try to make an arrest. When Governor Ross sent the territorial militia to bring him in, they were not successful.

At last, evidently tiring of being hunted, Lee Hamblet left New Mexico and disappeared. No one in Tierra Amarillo knew where he had gone. Actually he joined the gold rush to Alaska and it happened that just at the time he arrived in Nome City, a so-called "kodak fiend" was taking snapshots of people

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milling up and down the streets of Nome or working in the gold fields.

These snapshots were eagerly purchased and enlarged by railway and steamship companies who framed them and hung them in conspicuous places in their offices and depots to promote travel. Some of the enlargements were displayed on the walls of the depot at Albuquerque, New Mexico. There Dan Sullivan, former sheriff of San Juan County where Hamblet had lived, happened to look at a Nome City group of miners. At once Sullivan recognized the long-wanted Hamblet. There was a heavy reward for his capture, and the machinery of the law was set in motion. But when the officers reached Nome and tried to take Hamblet he resisted arrest and died with his boots on.

Although dying an outlaw, Lee Hamblet was thought of kindly by many persons in New Mexico Territory because of the heroic assistance he had given during an uprising in the 1890s of Navajo and Ute Indians.

A horse trap.

Mustangers and Their Methods

(Continued from page 17)

presence, to his looks, to his smell. At night he unsaddled while the wild bunch watched. He picketed his horse and slept. No horse came near him while he was afoot. Only after he was one of the herd did he finally lead them into a pen—untired, unmarred, fresh as they had been when he first sighted them.

There was a great variety of mustangers and many different methods of hunting. Between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande a group of religious mustangers operated. Usually a mesquite cross was at the entrance to their corrals. Money from captured mustangs often went to priests.

Occasionally a mustanger stole mustangs from another mustanger—but this was very rare. The standards of the wild horse hunters were the standards—high and strict—of brave adventurous men. When skullduggery occurred, when vicious and inhuman acts were perpetrated in order to secure a wild catch, it was generally the work of amateurs. The aces at their trade did not have to resort to brutality.

Frank Collinson was a mustanger whose most memorable exploit was his pursuit of a three-year-old white stallion. Accounts differ greatly in regard to this stallion. His color varies from a snow white to a creamy white, and even to a flea-bitten gray. The question naturally arises—was there one horse seen through different eyes, or two horses seen by one man's eyes. The white stallion's manada when on the run was led by a thoroughbred mare. Her colt ran with her. Reports agree that the colt was pure white.

Collinson tried to catch the mare as well as the stallion. After he had tried many times to capture the pair, he decided to crease them. Creasing is shooting to stun, nothing more. Collinson did not have the required skill—he killed them both. Their white colt was never captured. During a long close chase the colt leaped into one of the bottomless bogs on the Staked Plains. Was it accident or suicide? Did he deliberately choose death to capture?

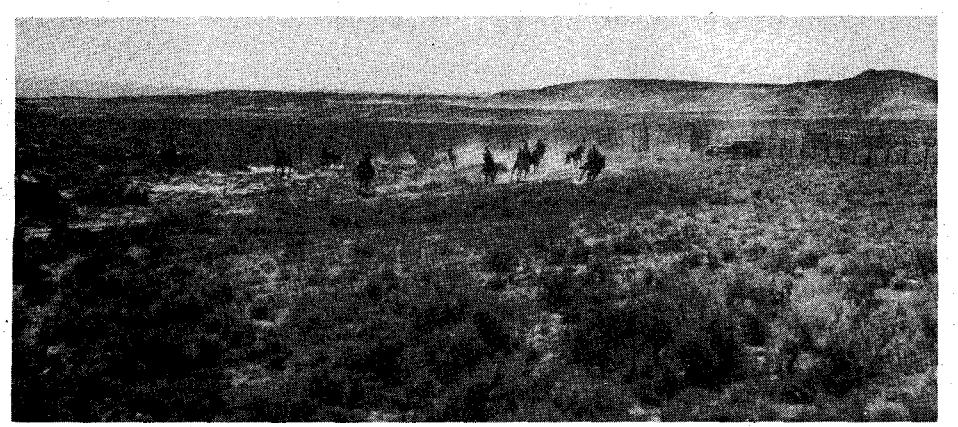
AME COLE was another name in the annals of mustanging. He had come west not to catch wild horses but to hunt buffalo. Cole was no longer hunting buffalo, however, since those great beasts were gone. He had taken a homestead, and was in a store one day when it was announced that $200 would be paid for the capture of a mustang known as Black Kettle. Cole was an interesting but very profane man—and no longer young when he set out to capture the mustang. He had many fancies as he sat in his homestead shack, waiting for the settlers to leave and for the buffalo to return. Cole expected to capture the stallion in about a week, but he soon learned that Black Kettle was no nomad. The horse seldom strayed from his two main watering places—about twenty miles apart. Cole was a wise man and didn't try too long to catch the elusive stallion.

Lockard and his partner, Simpson, were the next to try. With Lockard it was a fever that would not die down. When he and Simpson set out they were caught in a blizzard and nearly died. They wandered for days without the slightest idea where they were. After reaching safety, food and shelter were given them as well as some sound advice. An old mustanger advised them to forget Black Kettle—the horse was getting old and wasn't worth the trouble of bringing in. The partners did not listen.

They found Black Kettle and his mares, but again a blizzard forced the men to give up the chase. A blue roan mare was acting as sentinel of Black Kettle's manada. Simpson named her Aunt Susan. It was partly due to Aunt Susan that Black Kettle was kept alert to the presence of the two mustangers. Many legends have arisen from the long chase Lockard and Simpson made after Black Kettle and his manada. One is that a mist rose and surrounded the wild horses, making both horses and desert strange and unreal. Then the herd split up and it was impossible to find Black Kettle.

After the big run Lockard continued to hunt the black stallion, but he hunted alone. Simpson had had his fill of mustanging—he quit. At last, when Lockard was finally able to corral and capture the horse, Black Kettle was so tired and worn—and probably so old—that Lockard

The chase.



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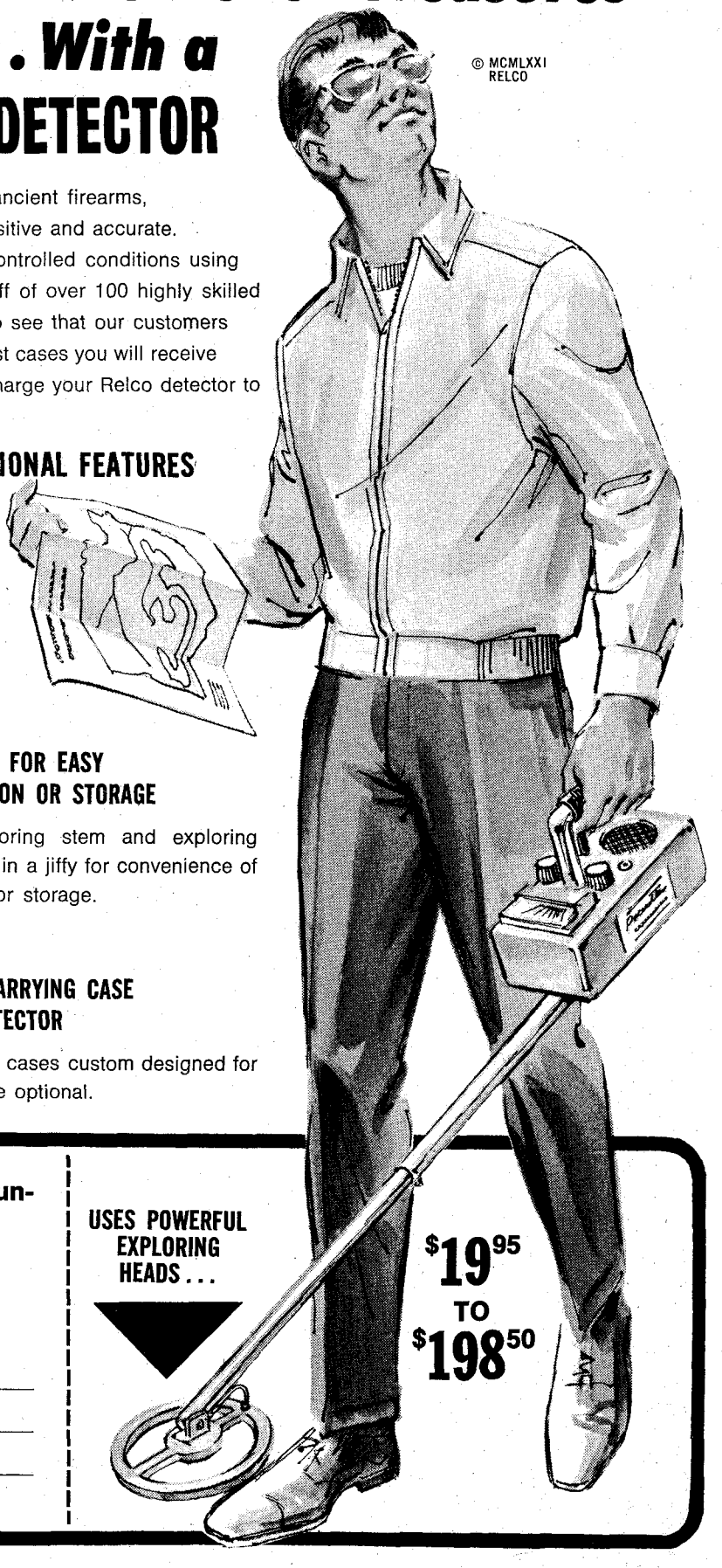

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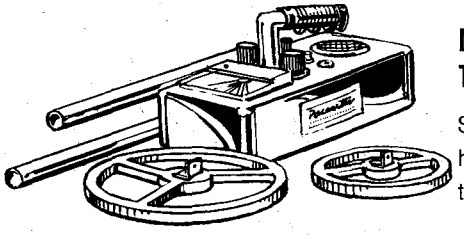

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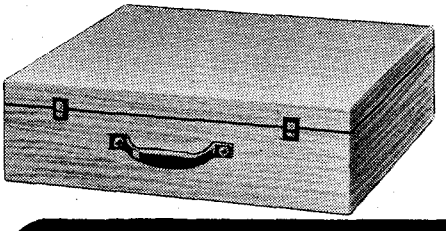

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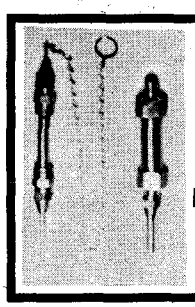

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found neither pride nor profit in his capture. Lockard had come about to the end of his mustanging, and indeed mustanging itself was passing away.

THE ERA of wild horses was a colorful page of history. Some of them were Canelos—that is, cinnamons or red roans. Such a one was ridden by John C. Fremont—on one of the most famous rides of history—when he was carrying a message to Garcia. Many of the people who made famous rides were not mustangers at all—just good horsemen. Many of the horses ridden in the Pony Express were mustangs.

A herd of wild horses racing across the plains was one of the most beautiful sights imaginable. The mustangers carried a part of this glamour too—or, at least, many of them did. It took courage, endurance, and imagination. Some men spent months walking a mustang down; some rode saddleless on his swiftest horse alongside a stallion he craved—then slid onto the stallion's back and clung there until the wild horse was mastered. The mustanger who rode back triumphantly on a wild mustang stallion—the horse unharmed—unbeaten—but entirely subject to the man who had tamed him—ah! That was a beautiful sight to see.

I have mentioned but a few of the mustangers—these few, however, are symbolic of the tribe. The mustangers were a race of men as wild and beautiful in their way as the wonderful horses they made their own. The wild mustangs and the brave mustanger who matched wits with them made a vivid contribution to the romantic side of the West.

Blanket Bill

(Continued from page 23)

chief offered his two daughters as brides. Not particularly enthusiastic, Bill went fishing by himself on the ceremonial day, came home tired, and went to sleep. The brides, loaded with paint and ornaments, were sent to awaken him. Bill struck out blindly, thinking the two apparitions were monsters ready to pounce. One of them fell to the floor. Both screamed bloody murder. The whole tribe descended on poor bewildered Bill. He tried to explain. The princesses generously forgave him, and the wedding festivities went on as scheduled.

AFTER several years of this kind of life, young Bill yearned with all his heart for his own people and his own speech. Only once, however, did he try to escape. He was recaptured immediately and from then on was constantly under surveillance. He had practically given up hope of ever being rescued, when one morning a sail appeared on the horizon. His heart leaped to his throat.

He watched almost without breathing as a shore boat was launched. The gravel crunched under its prow. The men jumped out. The only sign of recognition, however, was a sharply meaningful glance from the leader who put a finger to his lips. Bill got the idea at once.

Trading began—the usual dickering for furs in exchange for beads and trinkets, with an occasional blanket or a few pieces of metal.

"How many blankets do you want for the slave?" suddenly asked the white trader.

The chief's eyes narrowed with cupidity. "Blankets so high!" he said pointing to the top of Bill's head.

The trader gave a short nod, and the piling of blankets began. It took exactly twenty-three folded blankets to reach the top of Bill's head. Only when he was safely aboard ship did Bill take a deep breath. After all those years of captivity he was again a free man!

The voices of the sailors were music to his ears. They told him that Chief Trader Douglas of the trading post at Victoria had heard of a white man being held prisoner, and had sent out this search party. At Victoria, Bill became something of a celebrity. The white men dubbed him "Blanket Bill," but the Indians around the post came up with the name "Paseesie," their word for blanket. These names clung to Bill all the rest of his life. Douglas outfitted Bill with white man's clothing, and gave him a job as messenger between the company post and the growing town.

Bill soon found conventional life irksome, and one night quietly paddled himself across the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the Olympic Peninsula. Here, among the Clallam tribe, he slipped easily back into the Indian way of life. He even took a wife here, a young girl to whom he gave the name Alice. His genuine affection for her was to last a lifetime. She left the tribe and came with him to the Bellingham area where he took up a homestead. Together they built a two-room cabin in which they lived several years. The spot is still known as Jarman's Prairie, although all that remains now is a gnarled apple tree struggling for existence among second-growth firs. Alice made clothing for Paseesie out of whatever came to hand, was tolerant of his occasional derelictions, and waited patiently during his absences.

On one occasion he was very lucky indeed to get home. He was alone in his small dugout off Whidbey Island when he suddenly became aware of several northern war canoes not too far away. They were there for no good purpose, of that he was sure. They just might be some of his erstwhile friends whom he had no desire to see. The question was, had they seen him?

He decided that this was the time to pull one of the tricks they had taught him. He paddled as fast as he could into a small cove. Jumping into shallow water, he gave his light craft a strong shove that sent it skimming up the sandy beach. Without another glance he ran swiftly along the edge of the incoming tide. To the right was a high bluff, crowned by trees. In these he hid. Within a few minutes he saw the Indians ransack and break up his canoe, but they searched in vain for his footprints.

This small drama occurred on almost exactly the spot where another group of northern Indians beheaded Bill's con-

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temporary, Colonel Isaac Ebey. The co is still known as Ebey's Landing.

Blanket Bill had a good long wa ahead of him that day. He crossed tl island on foot, a distance of sever miles, before he found an available can to take him home via Deception Pa at the north end of the island.

NEWS of the California gold rush toc Bill away from Alice again. He spe the summer of 1850 on the Yuba River, some miles northwest of Marysville. Of course, gold was not for everyone to find, and Bill, who was never guilty of over-indulgence in hard work, was glad to come back to the Northwest, even though his pockets were empty.

The experience, however, gave him an idea of what the Forty-Niners needed, and he decided to act upon that knowledge. The "King George" men had introduced potatoes to the natives in the Puget Sound country, and Bill purchased their surplus at something like ten cents a bushel. In San Francisco potatoes sold for seven dollars a bushel. Cranberries, also, were desirable and sold for high prices. Hudson's Bay "London Dick" whisky was easily brought across the border, and of course commanded exorbitant prices in the gold fields. So whenever he could get space on a lumber schooner, Blanket Bill took a flier in the mercantile business.

Shortly after this he went to work for the newly established military post at Bellingham. Everyone liked Bill because of his cheerful attitude, and Captain Pickett (of later Civil War fame) gave him a contract carrying official mail between the army bases on Puget Sound. Bill hired Indian paddlers, paying them in part with red shirts or an occasional Hudson's Bay blanket, which they loved. But the Indians were notorious gamblers, and some of them were sure to come back to Fort Bellingham completely naked.

For some reason Bill got into financial difficulties in this mail-carrying deal, but shrugging his shoulders he went to work splitting rails at the fort for $75 per month and paid off as he said, "every last farthing" that he owed. One day Captain Pickett asked him to go on a trip to Victoria, which by that time had grown into quite a town and was the supply point for the whole Puget Sound area.

When the loaded canoes were ready for the return trip, Chief Factor Douglas spotted Blanket Bill. "Well, well," he greeted him jovially. "Here's my friend, the deserter."

Bill was embarrassed, but took the ribbing and joined the talk about the ransom incident.

"Last time I was up north," said Douglas, "I saw some squaws wearing earrings made out of your coat buttons!"

"Damn their old hides," said Blanket Bill in his Cockney accent, "they stole me naked and gave me a lousy old blanket. That's all I had for nine years!" Which was probably true, but even Bill admitted that in spite of their reputation for cruelty these natives had not mistreated him.

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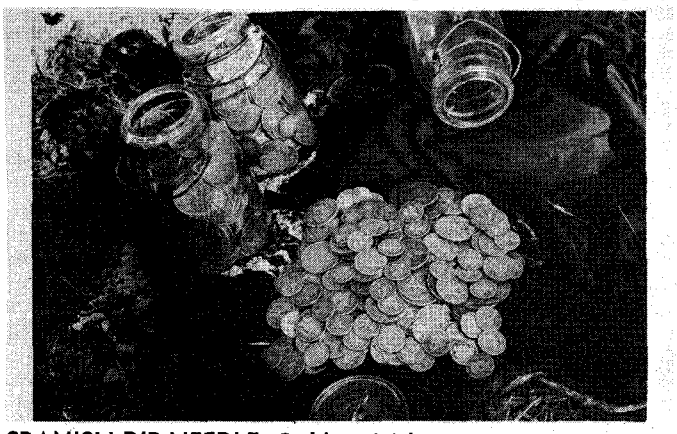

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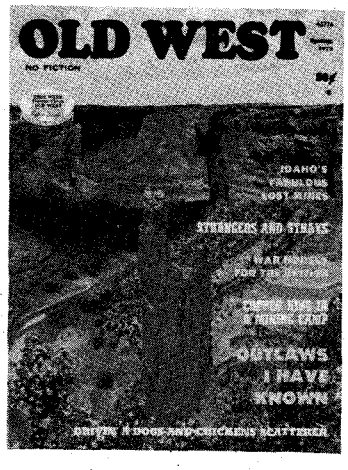

Spring, 1973 Issue

- IDAHO'S FABULOUS LOST MINES
- WAR HORSES FOR THE BRITISH
- DRIVIN' A DOGS-AND-CHICKENS SCATTERER
- LA PIEDRA PINTADA
- STOP-OVER AT CAUDILL'S RANCH
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He had, however, much more respect for the less warlike tribes along Puget Sound. When somewhat justifiably these tribes atacked the little village of Seattle, Bill served as interpreter to the sloop *Decatur* which by its presence prevented a full scale war. Bill was valuable because of his ability to speak several Indian dialects as well as the Chinook jargon.

He also worked for a time for the Western Union Telegraph Company on its project of stringing a line northward to meet one coming across Bering Strait. His sloop *Alice* was part of the fleet that carried hundreds of tons of wire and transformers up the Inside Passage to be taken to the interior of Canada. But the unexpected completion of the Transatlantic cable put an end to that project and also to Bill's job.

Although never accused of bringing either Hudson's Boy rum or Chinese opium across the border illegally, Blanket Bill was known to have been good friends with "Dirty Dan" Harris and "Pirate" Kelly, both known smugglers. The San Juan Islands provided excellent hiding places for illicit goods, so Bill's frequent fishing trips may not always have been what they seemed. He is definitely suspected of making it easy for his English sailor friends to cross the loosely patrolled border after unceremonious departure from their ships at Victoria.

IN 1872 Bill did get into real difficulties with the law and was actually tried for murder. Bad blood had been developing for some time in a Bellingham saloon where he was bartender. One night several men, including one James Farmer, started carousing. Bill didn't want any of that and said so. This didn't sit so well with the already drunken crew, and in retaliation they shot out the lights.

When Bill attempted to relight one of the lamps, Farmer atacked him with an iron rod. Bill grabbed his gun and fired. Farmer died instantly. That night Bill gave himself up to the sheriff and remained in jail for three weeks awaiting trial at Port Townsend.

On a summer's day the previous year Bill and Alice had been out to the bay in their dugout. Bill was stretched out at full length sleeping when Alice gave him a poke with her paddle.

"Wake up!" she urged. "There's something out there."

In the distance two black spots on the water looked like seals. Bill grabbed the other paddle. They found two men caught by an undertow, struggling for their lives. Bill and Alice brought them ashore.

"I'm Charles Bradshaw," said the most articulate of the two. "You saved our lives, and I'll never forget it."

Bill shrugged. At the time the name meant nothing to him.

But now, on the day of his trial at Port Townsend, he took a long look at the prosecuting attorney. Wasn't that the fellow he'd once pulled out of the bay?

Process of law was simple and direct in those days. After fifteen minutes of deliberation the jury returned a verdict of justifiable homicide. A debt had been paid, and Blanket Bill was welcomed back to Bellingham.

While his daughter Alice went to school, the family lived in the house which Captain Pickett had built shortly before the fort was deactivated. Bill loved children, Indian and white, although there is scant record of his own children, except Alice.

When news came of the gold discovery in the Klondike, Bill again caught the gold fever. Even after his friends made him realize that he was too old for such a strenuous project, his active mind demanded action. The new conversational topic was cross-country trips via the railroads that were building to the West Coast. Bill had seen neither the Midwest nor the East Coast. And what about his home country, England, that he had left when just a boy?

A letter was sent in care of the postmaster at Gravesend. Months passed. Then one day the answer came. It was from his niece. Blanket Bill read and reread the letter. Most of his family were gone, but a legacy of five hundred pounds sterling awaited him. Bill cared little for the money beyond the fact that it would pay for a trip to his childhood home.

This was probably the greatest adventure of his whole life. Gray-haired Blanket Bill, in store-bought suit and tie, stared through the train window at the kaliedoscope of America. Then came the ocean voyage. Sail had given way to steam, but the ocean he had crossed so long ago on his way to Tasmania was the same.

His niece welcomed him to London. To Blanket Bill the narrow streets and old houses were dingy and confining. History and tradition meant nothing compared with the cool green firs and untrammeled ways of the West. One day he said to his niece, "Why don't you come home with me? The West is a great country—there's real freedom there!"

She took him at his word. Maybe she, also, had inherited the spirit of adventure. Later she married an American and settled in Ferndale, a small town ten miles north of Bellingham. Bill, with his sailor's jacket and flowing tie became a familiar sight on the main street of Ferndale. Each day he and his cronies sat on the bench in front of the post office waiting for the postman's high wheeled automobile to appear. This was a contraption that Blanket Bill scorned. He prided himself on never having ridden in one.

One more story about Bill must be told. Shortly after the turn of the century someone found the flagpole from old Fort Bellingham lying among the blackberry vines on the site of the fort. It was still sound, and a group of patriotic women decided it should be put up again as an historical relic. Bill, who had stood beside Captain Pickett at the first ceremony, was invited as an honored guest to the festivities. A flag from Admiral Dewey's flagship was obtained, but at the formal raising the halyard unfortunately tangled in the block. That, every sailor knows, is just about the worst that can happen.

Everyone stood about helpless—that is, until Blanket Bill took over! For him, who had served in the British Navy it was no problem at all. He was eighty-three years of age, but climbed up like a youngster and untangled the halyard.

Blanket Bill's last ten years were happy ones, filled with visits from old friends, whites as well as Indians. His blue eyes twinkled when they called him "Paseesie." It was a fitting finale for a man who had been a deserter, a prisoner, a squaw man, an accused murderer, and had "shinnied" up a flag pole when he was past eighty. Blanket Bill himself would have said that he had lived "hyas closhe," a good life.

Trail to Thunder Mountain

(Continued from page 28)

it. Elmer and I went over away from camp, rolled our beds out on a big tarp I had, and then pulled the tarp up over us. Just before he crawled into bed Elmer hung his big hat up on a tree limb by the chin string.

Boy, that night it really cut loose and rained! It just poured! We pulled the tarp over our heads and let it rain. Along towards morning it felt awful heavy, so we eased it up enough to peek over, and there was a whole lake of water on top of us. We carefully tipped the tarp up and ran the lake off, staying nice and dry underneath it. When it was light enough to see we looked over toward the cook tent, and the fly was bent down almost to the ground. It was thin canvas anyhow, and it was just sprinkling over those guys worse than if they were out in the open. Finally ran them out of there.

In later years, when Elmer became renowned as a gun ballistic expert, big game hunter, and the author of several books on big game hunting and guns, his huge Stetson hat became a trademark and achieved fame right along with him. But you should have seen it that morning! It had collected so much rain that the weight had broken the chin strap, letting it plunk soddenly onto the ground. It was sitting there, plumb full of water, and looking very sad. Then I knew how a ten-gallon Stetson got its name. Wouldn't be surprised if that one held fifteen gallons!

AT THIS camp my esteem for Tagahashi grew every day. He was the best cook, the best packer, the best fisherman, and the best sport in the whole bunch. He was a great hand for making doughnuts and, although we usually ate at our own camp, every once in a while he'd call us over and set out a feed. Of course, on occasion that was reversed and a bunch of them would come to our camp to eat, saying they were tired of his cooking.

Whenever we went to their camp, Tagahashi would always set a pot of coffee over by me. "Now, that's for Cowboy," he'd say—he always called me 'Cowboy,' "I know Cowboy he like coffee."

As I mentioned earlier, he was a great peacemaker, too. Human nature being

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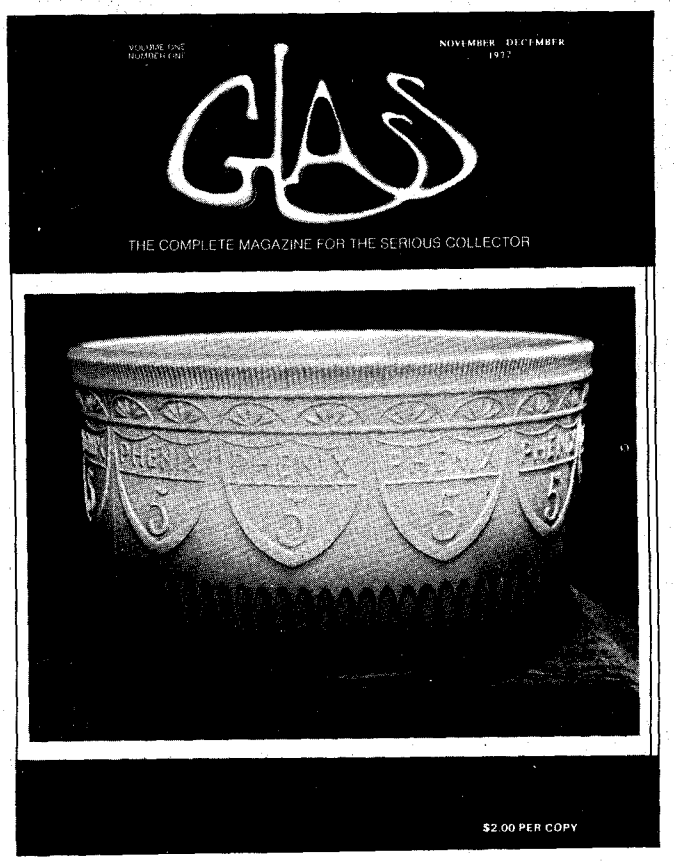

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what it is, tempers will wear thin, especially in a family situation where constant close association day after day in the rather rough conditions we were in, might cause friction. Whenever anyone got into an argument, Tagahashi would somehow manage to smooth it over. I remember one day, one of the stenographers got so mad at Zane that she grabbed the hat off his head, threw it on the ground and jumped on it. Tagahashi came to the rescue quick and calmed them down. He really had a wonderful way about him, always straightening them out.

I felt sorry for little Betty a lot of times, and I guess she knew I did, because she got so she'd come to me with all her troubles, just wanting a sympathetic ear. Like the day Burton (that's not his real name) came up to camp and invited them all down to his ranch for a big dinner. His ranch was one of the few places homesteaded and proved up along that rugged old Middlefork, and Burton told them he had some beautiful Morgan horses he wanted them to see. He was kind of a big show-off anyway, and of course he had ideas too.

Well, he got them down there and put Betty on one of his horses that was far from gentle. He must have known it would buck, and I guess it really did. Finally threw Betty. Then he gave them a big steak dinner.

When they got back to camp Betty came to me and told me all about the day; then she said, "And after it was all over with, he presented us with a huge bill. But please don't tell Dad." I don't know if Zane Grey ever found out, but it sure would have given him another good reason to distrust people.

What if that girl had gotten her leg broke or something. I was so mad I saw red. And I made a point of looking Burton up and really telling him off. There could have been an awful battle, too, if he'd smart-mouthed me at all. But he didn't.

There were always packers or Rangers working through that country in those days, and while we were at Bear Camp some of them brought a telegram for Zane. I don't know what it said, but he decided he'd better leave for home. I've often wondered about that telegram. I think he could see the trip was going to get too rough for him to enjoy, and had sent it himself. At any rate he, his two stenographers, and Tagahashi got ready to go. The rest of the party would stay to go hunting with us.

WHEN we started sorting supplies, there was a bunch of fancy food, all kinds of canned things, in friction-top five-gallon cans, and a lot of other stuff we knew we'd have no use for on the rest of the trip. So Zane said to Elmer, "Now, I'll give you all this. We'll let these other packers haul it out to where your trucks will pick it up when you get back, so it will be there waiting for you." Elmer thought it was a good deal, and thanked Zane for it.

When we packed the four of them and their personal things out to the Cove where their cars were, it was just as long and as hard a day as it had been coming in. We got to the Cove after dark as usual, and unpacked in the dark as usual. Elmer and I hadn't brought our own bedrolls because we didn't have room for them, so we started scratching around to find one in those scattered packs. And, gee, we found a dandy! When we rolled it out, it had nice Hudson's Bay blankets in it, and since it was freezing pretty hard at night by this time, they sure looked fine to us. We crawled in and slept like logs. The next morning we woke up to see everything covered with frost.

Poor Zane was already up, walking around. "Oh, there's my bed!" he said. "I couldn't find it last night and I just about froze to death in what I did find."

"Boy, that's a good bed," I said smugly, "and we sure enjoyed sleepin' in it!"

After we got them loaded up and on their way home, we went back to Bear Camp and got everything ready to move the rest of the party on down to the mouth of Big Creek, which was about twenty miles below Burton's ranch. We had to ford the Middlefork, and after all the rain it was pretty high. If you didn't hit it just right it swam a horse. That didn't bother me, though, for I was riding a big roan that was a good river horse and swam with her full back clear out of water.

We got the packstring all across, then came back to help the people cross. I could see that Betty was a little bit scared, so I rode up to her and said, "Betty, how'd you like to ride Rainbow across?" Boy, she crawled right off Paint and onto Rainbow.

"Take a picture of me, Jack," she said, smiling from ear to ear, "because this is the only time I'll ever be on Rainbow!" And it was. She rode Paint all the rest of the way, going and coming back. Anyway, Rainbow took her across safe and dry—and I got wet clear to my armpits! The water just churned around that little pinto.

Our next move was up on Big Creek through some of the roughest country there is. We were traveling in what is now known as the "Idaho Primitive Area" and it hasn't changed since the soldiers fought the Sheepeaters there in Idaho's last Indian war.

We stopped at "Cougar Dave" Lewis' place on Pioneer Creek. He was quite a character. Got his nickname and near-fame from hunting cougars. From there we went on up to Coyote Springs. There were a lot of big bucks there, but I'll have to admit our hunters were not the best in the West. However, we didn't lack for venison.

When we left Coyote Springs to go on to lower Cottonwood Meadows, one of the guys packed the kitchen box for me and I didn't check it. When I unpacked that night I found he'd stuck the baking powder in there just loose, down in the corner, and in bumping around all

Jerry Ravndal on his famous Arabian stallion *El Khamis*, at the Lemhi County Fair horse show in 1962.

Courtesy Clyde Stone Saddlery and Photo Shop, Salmon, Idaho

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day, the lid had come off, the can tipped over, and we lost it all. There was a lot of other stuff, including a bunch of cheese, in this same box.

Well, we got to the meadows after dark, naturally, which meant unpacking in the dark again. Everybody was awful hungry, so Elmer started looking around for something the others could nibble on while supper was being cooked. He dug down in this box, found the cheese, cut off the first slice for himself, and passed the rest of it around to everybody else.

After we'd all gone to bed that night, I heard Elmer start to groan, and the moaning kept getting louder and worse until I finally asked him what was the matter.

"I don't know," he said, "but I'm in terrible pain. And I'm starting to swell up."

"Well, I'll sharpen my knife and stick you, if you think it will help," I said, just kidding him, like he was a bloated cow.

I didn't realize how sick he really was, and pretty soon he started scaring me. He was actually puffing up all over! It was a mighty serious situation. Here we were, a hundred miles from nowhere, no doctor, and many days of rough trail between us and help of any kind. We couldn't imagine what was wrong. Then it finally dawned on me. That baking powder had sifted into the holes in the cheese, and Elmer had eaten a whole gob of it with that first slice he'd cut off!

I was one worried man, and I guess poor Elmer thought he was going to die. It was about two a.m. before it started wearing off. Every time I got the chance after that, I'd pick up that cheese and say, "Elmer, you want a slice?" And he'd roar, "NO! I do not!" He was probably off cheese for life.

FROM Cottonwood Meadows we went to Cold Meadow. Got some nice goats for our party, too. While there, Elmer's three horses took off from our herd. We finally found two of them, but the third, a bay horse with a turkey track brand on him, had vanished. Elmer vetoed hunting him up, thinking he'd come back on his own.

One day I was in camp alone— the rest were all out—and a couple of fellows came down the trail leading two pack mules. One of them was riding Elmer's horse. They stopped, and I said, "You didn't see anything of a little bay with a turkey track brand along the way, did you?"

He looked at me long and hard before he answered, "Well, you're lookin' right at him, ain't you?"

"Yeah, I know," I answered, not at all sure what would happen next.

"We found him back there," the stranger said, gesturing over his shoulder. He acted as doubtful as I felt, but I guess he figured he'd better try explaining first. "We found him while we were scouting for elk, and thought he belonged to Stonebreaker. We tried to lead him but he was a pull-back sonuvagun, so we had to put a saddle on him and ride him."

About that time Elmer came into camp, and everything smoothed out fine. Then, when they were leaving, the strangers mentioned they were short of tobacco. Elmer, in a big-hearted gratitude, gave them about a pound of ours. That was OK, but it wasn't too long afterward that we ran out. We first tried smoking coffee. Coffee makes a dandy smoke, you know. Like fun! Next Elmer tried some tea, and it puckered his mouth up until he could hardly get his pipe stem in. I laughed until I hurt.

Having brought only as much provisions as we figured we could get by with, we ran clear out of practically everything before too long. We had plenty of venison and flour, and that was about all. Incidentally, we made hotcakes without baking powder.

On top of that, there came a big snowstorm, making things even more miserable. Our party started talking about heading back home. About that time, some packers came in from the other side of the mountains. They were a sorry looking lot—they had come in over Two Point Pass and had killed seven of their horses on the icy trail.

When the packers left, I knew our party had definitely decided to go back, but I sure didn't know they intended to go by way of Two Point Pass! When I found that out, I balked. I'd been easy going the whole trip, packing wherever they decided to go and trying my best to

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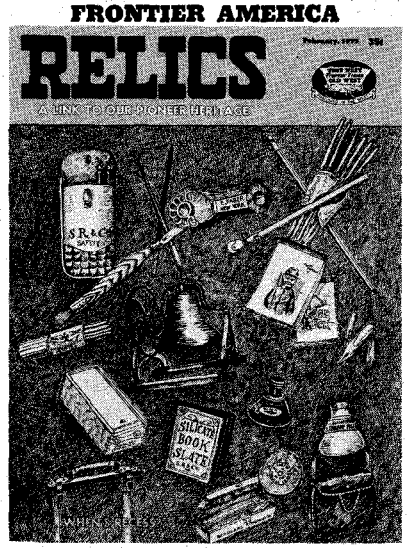

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make it pleasant for everyone. But this was too much.

"You guys can go anyplace you want," I said, as stubborn as a mule, "but I've got twelve head of horses and they are going with me by the way of Crooked Creek and Thunder Mountain. You go where you want!"

Well, they had to go where I wanted to go, and it did take a little bit longer but we didn't lose any horses on icy trails. We went up Crooked Creek to Monument Creek, and right over the shoulder of Thunder Mountain, around the famous Dewey mine—but of course there was nothing except ghosts in that country by then.

Nothing unusual happened all the way back to the cove, except that we were all getting mighty hungry. We came out on just venison practically, so we had our mouths all fixed for a fine feed on the grub Zane left there.

THERE was absolutely nothing left! Not anything. Obviously it had been stolen—it sure didn't sprout legs and walk away. Elmer was out all the things Zane had given him, which would have been a nice bonus. And we ate some more venison!

Zane also had been just loaded with good Navajo blankets, and there were only two of them left. We found out later that some guy had taken five packhorse-loads of that stuff up to a place on Loon Creek.

So now I could see why Zane was a bit fussy about things. I think that wherever he'd been, people had stolen stuff from him and gouged him until he just expected it. He was bitter about it and I didn't blame him one bit. If everybody took advantage of me that way I'd be bitter, too.

At the end of the trip Betty gave me the hat she had worn on the entire journey, and I wore it myself for many years after that. One Christmas she sent me a picture of her and Bob and Michele, their new baby daughter. Betty was quite a gal. I ran into a man about a year ago who was a horse trainer and gave riding instructions someplace in California, and he was giving lessons to one of her daughters—or maybe it was a granddaughter. And doggone it, I meant to get in touch with her again. But didn't do it.

I've always been a great fan of Zane Grey. His books actually made the West famous. But the one on Thunder Mountain, I think, was the poorest he ever wrote—he didn't even finish it, in my opinion. Just like he didn't finish the trip. However, he had gotten names, dates and so on from the local people, and enough sampling of the country to make the book authentic, and that was all he really needed.

At any rate, that trip was sure quite an experience for me! I'll never forget it!

Author's note: In 1941 when Jerry Ravndal married Velma Hillyard, the lovely brunette he had been in love with for several years, he was still wearing Betty Grey's hat every day. Velma recalls his telling her how he had originally shaped it for Betty, and how she had worn it during the whole two months of their trek into the wilderness.

Jerry and Velma ran their cattle ranch on Hughes Creek until October 1957, when the work got to be too much for him. They had also been raising pure-bred Arabian horses on a small scale, were very active in the riding clubs at Salmon City, and devoted a lot of their time to the youngsters in the county, teaching them how to ride, groom and train horses.

After they sold their ranch, they bought a smaller one just outside of town. There they expanded their business of raising and training Arabian horses, selling them for excellent prices all over the United States and three provinces of Canada. When Jerry's health continued to fail, he decided to sell his famous stallion, El Khamis, and his best mares to some Canadian people who long had been trying to buy them.

Jerry died in 1971. The foregoing article was written from a tape recording made by me in 1968, with the cooperation of his widow, Velma, who still lives at Salmon City.

Boone Helm—Man Eater

(Continued from page 32)

cases, while in fact they destroyed any evidence which their guilty comrades might have been stupid enough to leave at the scene of the crime.

After the fiasco trial which cleared Charley Forbes, Buck Stinson and Haze Lyons of the Dillingham murder, the good men of the settlements, knowing full well that Plummer deputies Ned Ray and Jack Gallagher were equally guilty because they had concealed evidence and had given perjured testimony, despaired of ever seeing law and order come to that part of the Territory.

In the latter part of 1862 things went from bad to worse. Stages were held up with increasing frequency and more men than ever were being waylaid and murdered on the trails. According to Thomas Dimsdale, who became a leading Vigilante but at that time was a schoolteacher and gave singing lessons in his spare time, Boone Helm fitted very well into the pattern of lawlessness in Alder Gulch. He quickly became "one of the leading spirits of the gang of marauders that infested this Territory," Dimsdale wrote in 1866.

Strangely, in the sizeable amount of contemporary material dealing with the murders and highway robberies which occurred throughout 1863 in and around Alder Gulch, the name of Boone Helm is conspicuous by its absence. Other men, subsequently hanged by the Vigilantes, are specifically identified as having committed particular crimes, but Helm's sole mention—despite Dimsdale's assertion that "testimony of the most conclusive character showed that his hands were steeped in blood,"—concerns his attempt to provoke a stage driver into a gunfight during October.

One of the daring drivers who carried their passengers, mail and valuables through blizzards, across swollen rivers

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and over high mountains, dodging outlaws and landslides, washed-out bridges and sudden death, was William Rumsey. Normally he worked a claim in the hope of striking it rich, but when the stageline was short-handed he drove between Virginia City and Bannack. A tough and outspoken man, Rumsey quickly incurred the displeasure of the outlaws and was marked for death.

In mid-October the coach he was driving was held up and robbed and a few hours later he arrived at Dempsey's Ranch in an ugly mood, full of talk about the so-called law enforcement officers of Idaho Territory in general and of the Alder Gulch area in particular. He did not know that the outlaws had singled him out for a grave and that Boone Helm had been selected as the executioner.

"Boone Helm, who had been awaiting his appearance, met him in the bar-room soon after his arrival, and invited him and other persons present to drink with him," Nathaniel Langford recorded. "Rumsey drank with the company two or three times. Helm called for more drinks.

" 'I've had enough,' said Rumsey, declining to drink more.

" 'Take another, take another,' said Helm. 'It's good to keep the cold out.'

" 'Not another drop,' replied Rumsey. 'I know my gauge on the liquor question, and never go beyond it.'

" 'You *shall* drink again,' said Helm, with an oath, casting a malicious glance at Rumsey.

" 'I *won't* drink again,' was the immediate reply, 'and no man can make me.'

" 'No man can refuse to drink with me and live,' replied Helm, seizing his revolver as if to draw it.

"Rumsey was too quick for him. Before the desperado could draw his pistol, Rumsey had his leveled at his head. Addressing him in a calm, steady tone, he said, 'Don't draw your pistol, or I'll shoot you, sure.'

"The two men gazed sternly upon each other for a minute or more, Helm finally losing his grasp on his pistol and saying, 'Well, you're the first man that ever looked me down. Let's be friends.' "

The incident passed off quietly, but afterwards William Rumsey watched his back when he was alone at his mining claim, and was even more careful when anywhere near Boone Helm.

BY EARLY December the depredations of the outlaws had become excessive and it was more than merely suspected that Sheriff Henry Plummer and a number of his deputies were either in league with the robbers or were actually operating as bandits themselves. The execution of George Ives on December 21, 1863, after conviction in a miner's court for a particularly bloody murder, led men in Nevada City and Virginia City to suggest to the leaders of other communities that a Vigilante movement be established. The time for action had come. An Executive Committee was set up which included tax collector and businessman Nathaniel P. Langford, schoolmaster Thomas J. Dimsdale, and prospector John X. Beidler, and in short order the Vigilantes were established with the avowed aim of bringing law and order to the mining camps.

On January 4, 1864 two suspected men were caught by the Vigilantes and before they were hanged one of them talked. Erastus "Red" Yager gave his captors a list of the gang of organized criminals and revealed that they had banded together under the nickname of The Innocents.

"He told us," John X. Beidler noted in his personal log, "that Henry Plummer was chief of the road agents and Bill Bunton was next to him. Others of the gang were Sam Bunton who was sent away for being a drunkard, Cyrus Skinner, Stephen Marshland, Dutch John Wagner, Aleck Carter, Whiskey Bill Graves, Johnny Cooper, Ned Ray, Bob Zachary, Mexican Frank, Frank Parish, Boone Helm and Club-Foot George, Haze Lyons, Bill Hunter, George Lowry, Billy Page, 'Doc' Howard, Jem Romaine, Billy Terwillinger, and Ged Moore."

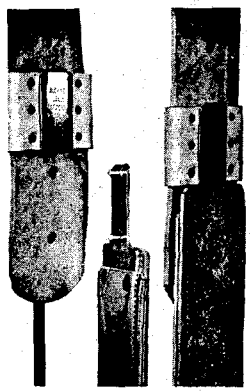
Red Yager and the man with him, George Brown, they left hanging from a tree in the Stinkingwater Valley and, armed with a list of names, details of crimes committed, and the location of hideouts, the Vigilantes swooped. Yager had been a messenger for the gang and he told of the bandits' "bookkeeper," who noted down which members committed any particular crime, how much it yielded and how much was to be divided up between whom. It was learned that The Innocents had been responsible for one hundred and two murders in the region of the gold diggings. The Vigilantes had all the information they needed.

The very fact that Alder Gulch and its numerous townships were part of Idaho Territory was a source of annoyance to the miners, who wanted a new Territory created for reasons of administration and law enforcement, as well as prestige. Many of them believed that the total lawlessness of their region was one of the obstacles holding back the dividing up of Idaho Territory; there was an urgent need for the law-abiding to make the trails to and from the diggings safe for all. They swung into action.

Sheriff Henry Plummer, crying and begging, was hanged on January 10 from a gallows he had himself built at Bannack City. A few hours later Buck Stinson and Ned Ray were also executed by the Vigilantes. The following day Dutch John Wagner and Joe Pizanthia (a road agent, though not named by Yager) were hanged.

Less than forty-eight hours afterwards, it was learned that six of the wanted men—Boone Helm, Bill Hunter, Jack Gallagher, Club-Foot George Lane, Haze Lyons and Frank Parish—were in Virginia City and the word went out to the Vigilantes all along the gulch.

"On the thirteenth day of January, three days after Plummer was executed, an order was quietly made for the Vigilantes to assemble at night in sufficient force to surround the city," Nathaniel Langford wrote. "Not a man was to be permitted to leave the city after the



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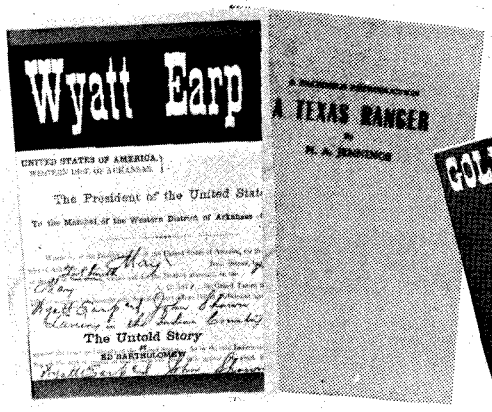

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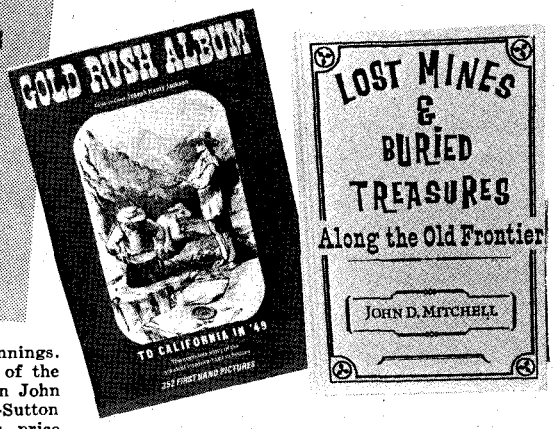

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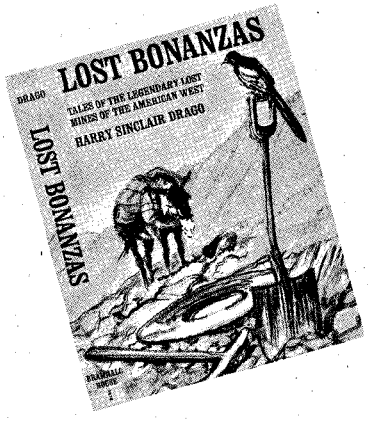

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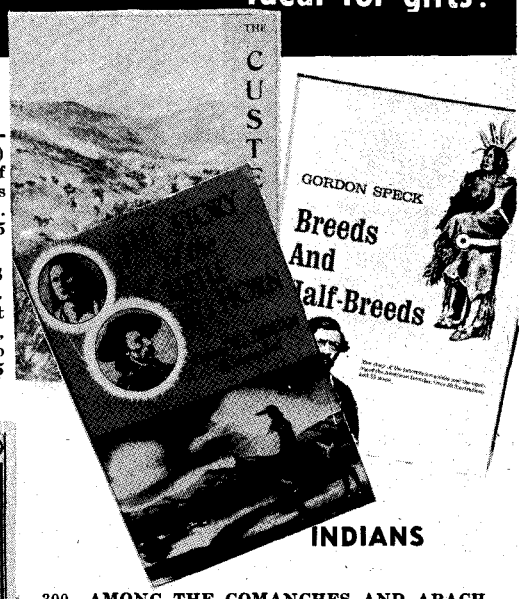

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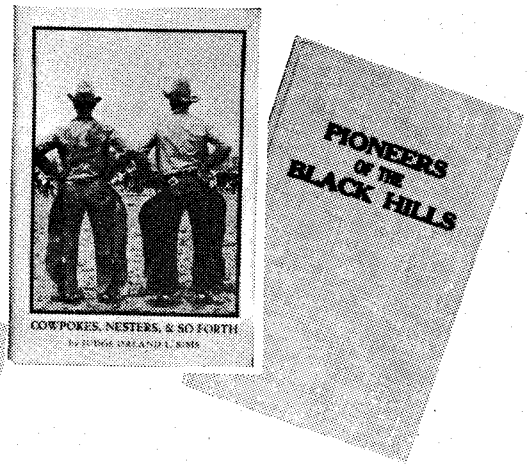

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line of guards was established."

The decision to hang the six men was taken by "the Executive Committee, in solemn conclave assembled," said Dimsdale. The previous executions, in his opinion, had had an effect "both marked and beneficial," but much more needed to be done. "Nothing remained but to carry out the good work so auspiciously begun, by a vigorous and unhesitating severity, which should know no relaxation until the last blood-stained miscreant that could be captured had met a felon's doom."

IT WAS a sleepless night for many Vigilantes, roused from beds at their diggings, who had to trek down the gulch to Virginia City.

"Morning came—the last on earth that the five desperadoes should ever behold," wrote Dimsdale. "The first rays of light showed the pickets of the Vigilantes stationed on every eminence and point of vantage round the city. The news flew like lightning through the town. Many a guilty heart quaked with just fear, and many an assassin's lip turned pale and quivered with irrepressible terror. The detachments of Vigilantes, with compressed lips and echoing footfall, marched in from Nevada, Junction Summit, Pine Grove, Highland, and Fairweather, and halted in a body on Main Street. Parties were immediately detailed for the capture of the road agents."

Bill Hunter, who had either been tipped off or was guided by a sixth sense, made haste to leave Virginia City. "He managed to crawl away, along a drain ditch, through the line of pickets that surrounded the town, and made his escape," Dimsdale reported. The escape was only temporary, however, for while Hunter did not swing with the five other men fated to die that day he met his execution at Vigilante hands not long afterward.

"Frank Parish was brought in first," Dimsdale recorded. "He was arrested without trouble, in a store, and seemed not to expect death. He took the executive officer to one side and asked, 'What am I arrested for?' He was told, 'For being a road agent and thief, and accessory to the murders and robberies on the road.' At first he pleaded innocent; but at last he confessed his complicity with the gang, and admitted being one of the party that robbed the coach between Bannack and Virginia, and that he was guilty of stealing horses and stock for them. He used to butcher stolen cattle, and attend to the commissariat business. He gave some directions about articles of clothing belonging to him, and the settlement of some debts. Until his confession, it was not known that he had any share in the robbery of the coach."

The arrested men were to be held in a cabin while a part-finished building was prepared as gallows at which time they were to perish in a mass execution rather than being hanged individually.

"Club-Foot George [George Lane] was arrested at Dance & Stewart's," Dimsdale said. "He was living there, and working at odd times. He was perfectly cool and collected, and inquired the reason for his arrest, as Parish had done previously. On receiving the same answer, he appeared surprised and said, 'If you hang me you will hang an innocent man.' He was told that the proof was positive, and that if he had any preparations to make he must do it at once as his sentence was death. He appeared penitent and sat down for some time, covering his face with his hands. He then asked for a minister, and one being immediately sent for, he talked and prayed with him till the procession to the gallows was formed. In his pocket-book was found an extract from a Western newspaper, stating that George Lane, the notorious horse-thief, was Sheriff of Montana. Lane was a man of iron nerve; he seemed to think no more of the hanging than a man would of eating his breakfast."

Elsewhere in Virgina City other dramas were being enacted. One party was out looking for Jack Gallagher while another searched for Boone Helm. Many of the ordinary miners along the gulch knew nothing of the day's doings and the first inkling they received that things were not normal was the sight of armed Vigilante groups hunting for the wanted men.

Miner Chauncey Barbour recalled later that he had spent the night in Virginia City, and had just finished his breakfast preparatory to leaving for his home eight miles away, when "suddenly a battalion of armed men appeared at the lower end of the main street." He was not especially interested and started out for home, only to be stopped on the edge of town by a Vigilante sentry, who turned out to be his own partner. He was told that the instructions were that nobody could leave, but that anyone could enter Virginia City.

William F. Drannan, who of course has long since lost his credibility as a reliable witness, placed himself in Virginia City that day—and probably in this instance was not lying. He stated that he was temporarily working at the general store of Boon and Bivian, having just brought in a wagontrain of merchandise for them.

"By the time we had breakfast over, people were beginning to come in to trade, and happening to look down the street I saw forty or fifty men all well armed come marching up the street in the direction of the store," he wrote later. "They marched up to a large gambling house called The Shades. There they halted while some of them went in."

Chauncey Barbour, unable to leave for home and his curiosity now thoroughly aroused, had followed this group of Vigilantes led by "Old Man" Clark to see what would happen. He followed the men who went into the establishment—which he identified as the "California Exchange" and called "a sort of headquarters of the gang"—and heard the barman tell Clark that one of the men being sought was in a back room in bed with a double-barrelled shotgun at each side of him and a battery of revolvers as well. This particular group of Vigilantes, according to Dimsdale, was looking for

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Haze Lyons. Instead, they found Jack Gallagher.

CLARK went into the back room alone and, said Barbour, "soon he reappeared, grasping by the collar a livid wretch whose knees were knocking together." Gallagher had given up without a fight. He was marched out of the building and on down the street toward the Vigilante headquarters.

In the meantime the group who was after Boone Helm had found him in front of the Virginia Hotel. It was known that he was the most dangerous of the men to be apprehended and he was taken, Langford said, "by strategy" in order to avoid a fight.

"Two or three men were detailed for his capture of whom he would entertain no suspicion, and they played their part, apparently, so carelessly and well, that he was seized without being able to make any effort at resistance," Dimsdale reported with satisfaction.

Drannan said he saw Helm brought to the house where the other men were being held and noted that he "had one hand tied up." Gallagher had arrived at the building with his captors at almost the same time.

According to Langford, Gallagher had recovered from his initial fright and seemed hopeful of bluffing his way out of the perilous situation. He "bounded into the committee-room, swearing and laughing as if the whole affair was intended as a joke," the Vigilante historian wrote. " 'What,' said he, with an oath and epithet appended to every word, 'is it all about? This is a pretty break, isn't it?' On being informed of the charges against him, and the sentence of the Committee, he dropped into a seat and began to cry. In a few moments he jumped up, and . . . demanded the names of the persons who had informed against him."

He was told that Red Yager had provided much of the information and immediately "cursed the dead ruffian for a traitor, liar, and coward, in the same breath." Boone Helm reacted very differently.

"With an armed man on either side, and one behind with a pistol presented at his head, this veteran scoundrel, bloodier by far than any of his comrades, was marched into the presence of his judges," Langford said. Dimsdale noted that Helm "lamented greatly that he 'had no show' when taken." He told the Vigilante leaders that the posse "would have had a gay old time taking me, if I had known what they were after."

Helm seemed disinclined to make trouble, which surprised his captors. "His right hand was wounded, and supported by a sling," wrote Langford. "With much apparent serenity, he sat down on a bench, and looked defiantly into the faces of the members of the Committee."

When told that he was accused of murder and highway robbery he shrugged. He was then told that he was to hang.

"I am as innocent as the babe unborn," he told the Vigilantes. "I never killed any one, or robbed or defrauded any man; I am willing to swear it on the Bible."

The Committeemen were staggered by this remark. Both Langford and Dimsdale, in their accounts, mention the Bible affair with obvious distaste. "Less for any more important purpose than that of testing the utter depravity of the wretch, the interrogator handed him a Bible," Langford wrote. "With the utmost solemnity of manner and expression, he repeated the denial, invoking the most terrible penalties upon his soul, in attestation of its truthfulness, and kissed the volume impressively at its close. The Committee regarded this sacrilegious act of the crime-hardened reprobate with mingled feelings of horror and disgust." Dimsdale said that the Bible was given to him because the Committee was "anxious to see if he was really so abandoned a villain as to swear."

THE President of the Committee took over the proceedings. "This denial can avail you nothing," Langford quotes him as saying. "Your life for many years has been a continuous career of crime. It is necessary that you should die. You had better improve in the little time left you in preparation."

Helm then turned to one of the Vigilantes and asked if he could see him alone for a moment. The man thought that Helm wanted to pray with him and suggested sending for a clergyman. Helm shook his head. He did not want a priest. The man agreed to go into the next room with him.

"On reaching the inner room," Dimsdale reported, "the prisoner said, 'Is there no way of getting out of this?' Being told that there was not, and that he must die, he said, 'Well, then, I'll tell you. I did kill a man named Shoot, in Missouri, and I got away to the West; and I killed another chap in California. When I was in Oregon I got into jail, and dug my way out with tools that my squaw gave me.' Being asked if he would not tell what he knew about the gang, he said, 'Ask Jack Gallagher; he knows more than I do.' Jack who was behind a partition, heard him, and burst out into a volley of execrations, saying that it was just such cowardly sons of - - - - - - and traitors that had brought him into that scrape."

Seemingly having made up his mind that he was to die, Boone Helm made the best of a bad day. "I have dared death in all its forms," Langford quotes him as saying, "and I do not fear to die. Give me some whiskey."

Jack Gallagher, reported Dimsdale, having exhibited bravado and tears combined, grew worse. "His general conduct and profanity were awful, and he was frequently rebuked by the chief of the executive." Langford noted that finally he was taken out of the committee room "while uttering the most terrible oaths and blasphemies."

Helm, on the other hand, settled down. "The guilty wretch," said Langford, "having been consigned to the custody of keepers, steeped what little sensibility he possessed in whiskey, and passed

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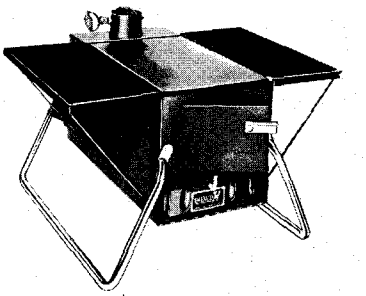

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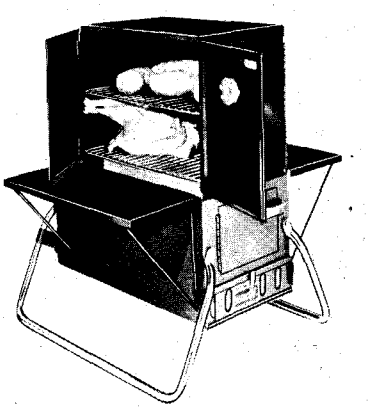

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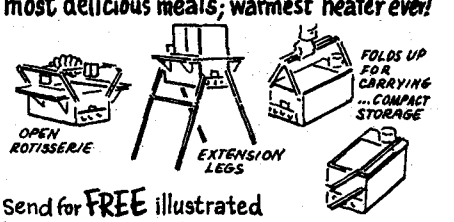

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the time until the executions in ribald jesting and profanity."

Haze Lyons was eventually brought in after being found in a shack on the edge of town having his lunch. He said that he had been advised by friends to get out of town at least six weeks before, but did not wish to leave a woman with whom he was friendly.

"He, of course, pleaded innocent, in the strongest terms," Dimsdale said, "but he had confessed to having murdered Dillingham, to a captain of one of the squads of the guard, in the presence of several witnesses; and he was a known road agent. He gave some directions for letters to be written."

He also begged to see his mistress, which was refused. Time and again, almost up to the moment of death, he pleaded in vain to be allowed to see her, and when he finally dangled from a rope he was wearing her gold watch as a souvenir.

Midday had come and gone and it was time for the prisoners to be taken to the place of execution. Bill Hunter had not been found, though the men in charge of preparing the gallows did not know this and set up six ropes for the hanging.

"After all was arranged for hanging them," wrote Thomas Dimsdale, "the prisoners were ordered to stand in a row, facing the guard, and were informed that they were about to be marched to the place of execution. Being asked if they had any requests to prefer, as that would be their last opportunity, they said they had none to make. They were then asked if they had anything to communicate, either of their own deeds or their comrade road agents; but they all refused to make any confession. The guards were ordered to pinion their prisoners."

Jack Gallagher suddenly broke away from the men with him and, shouting that he would not be hanged in public, grabbed a knife and tried to cut his throat. The Vigilante leader put a gun to his head and demanded the weapon. Strangely, Gallagher, who might have been expected to prefer shooting to hanging, meekly surrendered the knife.

"Boone Helm," remarked Langford, "with his customary adjective profanity, said to Gallagher in a consolatory tone, 'Don't make a fool of yourself, Jack. There's no use or sense in being afraid to die.'"

The Vigilantes and their prisoners prepared to leave the cabin. "The chief called upon men that could be depended upon, to take charge of the prisoners to the place of execution," Dimsdale wrote. "The plan adopted was to march the criminals, previously pinioned, each between two Vigilantes, who grasped an arm of the prisoner with one hand, and held in the other a 'navy' [Colt]—ready for instant use. When Haze Lyons heard the order above mentioned, he called out, [to John X. Beidler, the Vigilante hangman] 'X. I want you to come and stay with me till I die,' which reasonable request was at once complied with. The criminals were marched into the center of a hollow square, which was flanked by four ranks of Vigilantes, and a column in front and rear, armed with shotgun and rifles carried at half present, ready to fire at a moment's warning, completed the array. The pistol men were dispersed through the crowd to attend to the general deportment of outsiders."

William Drannan, who reported himself as observing the activities from the Boon & Bivian store, saw the prisoners brought into the street.

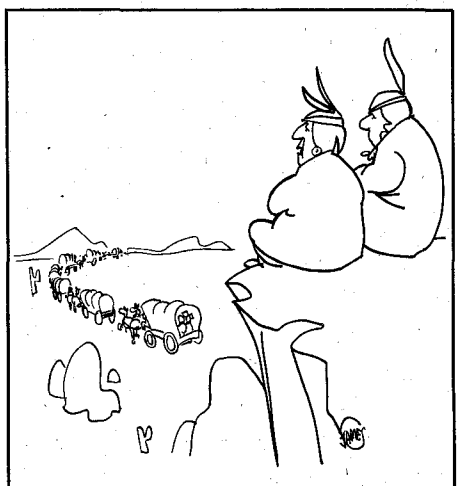
"Mr. Boon and I walked down the street by the side of the crowd, and after they had gone one block, for some reason they came to a halt," he said. He was unable to see what was happening, but heard Boone Helm complaining loudly.

"THE procession marched in the direction of the scaffold with slow and solemn pace," Nathaniel Langford said. "The silence of the great throng was unbroken by a whisper, and, more eloquently than language could have done, declared the feelings of anxiety and suspense by which all were animated. Some little delay being necessary to complete the preparations at the scaffold, the procession halted in front of the Virginia Hotel."

Only those near enough to see all that was happening—and Drannan was not one of them—heard Club-Foot George Lane ask Judge Dance to pray with him. The judge dropped to his knees with Lane and Gallagher beside him. Haze Lyons asked that his hat be removed, and Frank Parish stood reverently. Only Boone Helm seemed irritated by the praying.

"For God's sake, if you're going to hang me, I want you to do it, and get through with it," he said loudly. "If not, I want you to tie a bandage on my finger."

Langford reported that Helm "continued, as from the first, to treat all the proceedings with profane and reckless levity." Gallagher was wearing a cavalry overcoat trimmed with fur, and Helm said to him: "Give me that coat, Jack. You never yet gave me anything." Gallagher snarled back: "It's little use you'll make of it now." Both men started shouting to friends. Gallagher saw a man he knew in the window of the hotel. "Say, old fellow, I'm going to heaven," he yelled. "I'll be there in time to open the gate for you." Helm called out: "Halloo, Bill! They've got me this time; got me, sure, and no mistake."



"Most of them are alright—It's just a few radical militants that give the rest a bad name."

Drannan said he could only see four of the condemned men, but George A. Bruffey, who had hurried up the gulch after returning to his cabin for lunch and finding the whole Nevada settlement deserted, was much nearer to the building which was to serve as a gallows. He could see the five men, and also noted that six ropes had been prepared. On the way to the hanging he had seen other Vigilantes still out searching for Bill Hunter.

"The central cross-beam of an unfinished log store, cornering upon two of the principal streets, was selected for a scaffold," Langford wrote. "The building was roofless, and its spacious open front exposed the interior to the full view of the crowd. The ropes, five in number, were drawn across the beam to a proper length, and fastened firmly to the logs in the rear basement. Under each noose was placed a large, empty dry-goods box, with cord attached, for the drops."

Both Langford and Dimsdale speak of five ropes being in readiness, and certainly there were only five men to be hanged, but the Vigilantes in charge of the preparations for the execution had been told to expect six men, which would have included Bill Hunter, and had set up six ropes. "The crowd had made a miscount—they had six ropes, but only five men," noted George Bruffey.

After the prayer had been said by Judge Davis, the Vigilantes led the condemned men, their hands bound, to the place of execution.

"The guard crossed the street, opened ranks, and the prisoners were conducted through into the building, each as he entered stepping upon one of the dry-goods boxes," Langford wrote. "Ranged side by side, Club-Foot George was the first on the east side of the room; next to him was Haze Lyons, then Jack Gallagher, then Boone Helm, and near the west wall Frank Parish. The area in front of them was occupied by the guard and the members of the Executive Committee. The two streets in front and at the side of the building were crowded with armed Vigilantes and spectators."

The men's hats were removed, Club-Foot George managing to take his off himself, the nooses were adjusted and they were asked to name any last request. Haze Lyons again asked to see his mistress and again was refused. Jack Gallagher demanded a drink of whiskey, which seemed to shock the Vigilantes—at least, Langford reported that they were shocked by "his exhibition of depravity." George Bruffey, who had climbed up a wall for a better view, recorded that after the request by Gallagher—who was "frothing and swearing"—the whiskey was handed round and all the condemned men took a swig except for Haze Lyons.

Club-Foot George saw a friend in the crowd and yelled, "Good-bye, old fellow—I'm gone." As the Vigilante lead-

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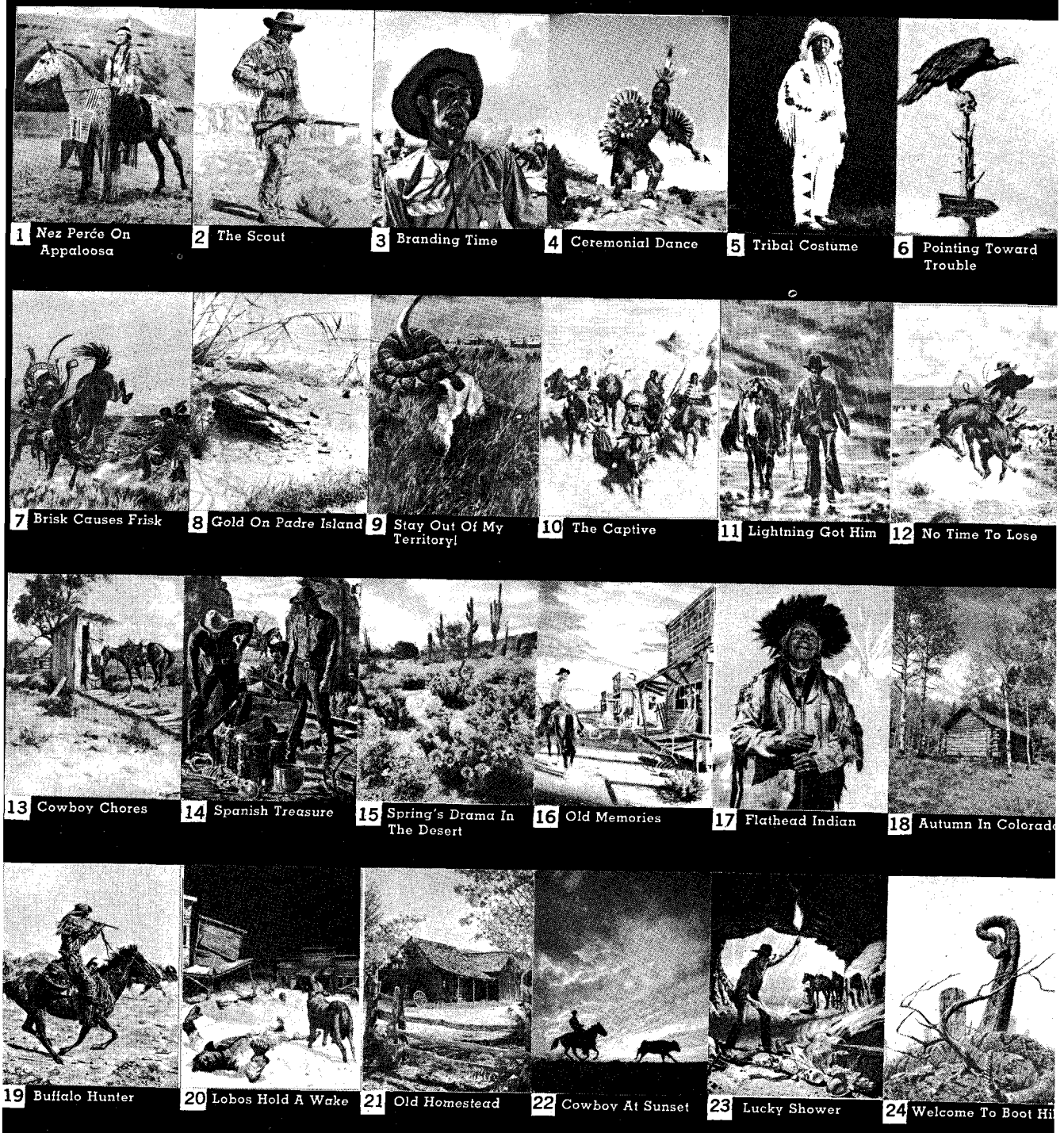

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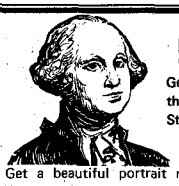

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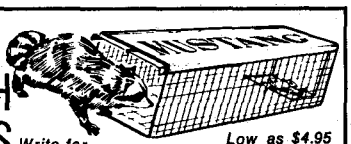

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er's voice rang out with the words, "Men, do your duty," George jumped from his box before it could be pulled from under him. All agreed that he went easily. Dimsdale said that he "died in a short time" and Langford said that he expired "with hardly a struggle." George Bruffey used the word "quietly."

Standing on his own box, Boone Helm watched his companion die. "There goes one to hell," he remarked.

Jack Gallagher was weeping and swearing alternately. "I hope that forked lightning will strike every strangling ------- of you," he cried aloud. The box was snatched from under him and, said Dimsdale, "brought his ribaldry and profanity to a close, which nothing but breaking his neck would ever have done." Bruffey considered that Gallagher "died hard."

"Kick away, old fellow," commented Boone Helm, calmly surveying what Langford called "the struggles of the dying wretch." He then glanced around and remarked: "My turn comes next. I'll be in hell with you in a minute."

Taking a final look at the silent mass of faces, Helm yelled: "Every man for his principles! Hurrah for Jeff Davis! Let her rip!"

The box flew from under him and, said Langford, "his body fell with a twang which killed him almost instantly." Bruffey also thought Helm jumped just as the box was removed and said that he was "soon still."

Frank Parish asked that a handkerchief be tied over his eyes, refused to confess to anything, and it was over quickly for him too. Langford noted that he "died and made no sign."

Haze Lyons, who had throughout the proceedings never stopped talking about his mother and the good upbringing she had given him, finally sent word to his mistress, charging her with seeing that he was decently buried. Months earlier, when it had been expected that Lyons, Stinson and Forbes would be executed for Dillingham's murder, graves had been dug for them. They were not used, and Lyons and Buck Stinson, so Dimsdale recorded, "actually committed an offense revolting to all notions of decency, in those very graves, in derision of their judges, and in contempt for their power."

The grave-digger had not been paid. In the last seconds of Lyon's life this macabre man stood before Lyons and, looking up, said: "I dug your grave once for nothing; this time I'll be paid, you bet." Haze Lyons plunged to his death, said Dimsdale, "apparently without pain"—certainly, said Langford, "without a struggle."

IT WAS all over. The bodies were left hanging for two hours and then cut down. Their friends claimed them for burial and the five were laid side by side on Cemetery Hill.

The Vigilantes, far from being the murderous bunch of pious do-gooders, as they—and especially their hangman John X. Beidler—have been presented, were public-spirited citizens who took strong measures to make the Alder Gulch diggings and their trails safe for all.

There was, however, grim humor sometimes. A bystander who watched the adjusting of the rope around Frank Parish's neck, talked to the Vigilante hangman afterwards.

"Did you not feel for the poor man as you put the rope round his neck?" he asked.

"Yes," answered the Vigilante, "I felt for his left ear."

The outlaw band who called themselves The Innocents was broken up forever. "On the 14th day of January, 1864, the *coup de grace* was given to the power of the band by the execution of five of the chief villains," Thomas Dimsdale reported with relief.

Erastus "Red" Yager had named twenty-two men in his confession to the Vigilantes who hanged him in the Stinkingwater Valley on January 4, 1864. Within a month the following also had been executed: Henry Plummer, Ned Ray, and Buck Stinson at Bannack City, January 10; Dutch John Wagner and Joe Pizanthia (not named by Yager) at Bannack City, January 11; Boone Helm, Club-Foot George, Haze Lyons, Jack Gallagher and Frank Parish at Virginia City, January 14; Stephen Marshland at Big Hole Ranch, January 16; William Bunton at Deer Lodge Valley, January 19; George Shears at Frenchtown, January 24; Cyrus Skinner, Aleck Carter, John Cooper, and Bob Zachary at Hells Gate, January 25; "Whiskey Bill" Graves at Fort Owens, January 26; Bill Hunter at Gallatin Valley, February 3.

Numerous other members of the gang were banished from the mining camps along with a host of hangers-on and two so-called lawyers who had defended George Ives and other members of The Innocents.

Thus died Boone Helm, killer and cannibal. "Helm was the most hardened, cool, and deliberate scoundrel of the whole band, and murder was a mere pastime to him," wrote Thomas Dimsdale. "He died with profanity, blasphemy, ribaldry and treason on his lips." He died, therefore, as he had lived.

Yours Until Death, William Grounds

(Continued from page 15)

AS THE story of Billy Grounds is usually told, he and Zwing Hunt left from Texas together and stayed on in New Mexico together but from the letter it seems that the two were separated. Hunt, who was older than Billy, is often regarded as the evil influence in the boy's life. Since we have only one side of this correspondence, it is impossible to know if Billy was simply missing his friends or was assuring his mother that he was no longer associating with a man of whom she disapproved. And poor Charles Cannon who left afoot—not one other word of history or legend sheds light on his fate.

Billy continued with a passage which must have been far from comforting to the mother back in Texas.

Tell Ace and Bird howdy for me and write to me and tell me all the news. . . .

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Well, I have no news to write but I was in a shooting scrape the other day. There was one man got shot in the outfit. His arm got broke and there was two men got shot by the side of the head. But they right and sound. They was about 15 men in the outfit but nobody killed. Well, I will close now so good bye to all. Take care of yourselves. Your true child until death, dear Mother yours true.

Shakespeare was famous for its free-for-all gunfights and evidently Billy got involved in one of them; so, like many boys, he had to brag a little. This might have been the fight in which Curley Bill Brocius fell off the roof, but probably not. According to old-timers, no one at all was hurt in that fight (excepting for Curley being bruised up, of course). The cowboys and miners fought all that night, taking drinks between shots and this may have accounted for the poor aim as well as for Curley Bill's awkwardness.

The next letter is dated May 4, 1880, only a week after the former one. The very irregular intervals between letters are hard to understand. It could be that many have been lost. It also may have been that Billy, when busy with interesting and amusing things, would forget about writing for long periods, and then write several letters in a row when he was feeling blue and homesick.

Dear Mother, I thought I would try and write you all a few lines to inform you all that I am fat and getting along all right and doing well. Ma I got 2 horses. I bought one the other day and paid $65.00 for him. I got him from John Ringo the man that was with Scott Cooley that time up at Scald Springs [probably should be Sour Spring].

The area in Central Texas which was Billy's birthplace, spawned many another hard character—men made hard by the times in which they lived—and a good many of these had known each other before they rode west.

John Ringo, who had ridden into Shakespeare with his sidekick, Joe Hill, some months earlier than Billy Grounds, came because he knew some of the Texans who had worked in the early '70s as hired fighting men for the silver and diamond mining companies then running Shakespeare, or Ralston City.

Well, Ma. . . . I would like to see you all now and you can look out for me. I'm liable to ride in on you all any time in the world. . . . I am running a saloon of my own. Kiss Ace and Bird. So good by to all.

Yours until death. William Grounds

THE NEXT letter, dated May 13, 1880, was written to Billy's brother-in-law, the husband of Billy's sister Maggie. Billy seems to have been very fond of this man who was, a few years later, to die in a flood and leave Maggie a young widow with three children.

Dear dear old Brother, I have just wrote a letter to Ma and I thought I would write [you and] Mag a few lines. . . . So I am well and doing well and have got a mine that am offered $6,000 for it and won't sell for there is good men told me not to take it for I can get

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$10,000 for it soon and if I do you can come out here now. . . . If you will agree to come out here I will send you $100 to come on and I will meet you on the freighter and come on the way with you all and you can make more money in one week here than you can in 2 months there. . . . I want you to try and find out if they have got a bill against [me] or not. So good bye to all. Mag, Kiss the Boy [or baby] for me. Write soon and often.

William Grounds Direct to
Shakespeare, Grant County, N. M.

The next letter is dated May 15, 1880, only two days later but was evidently written while Billy and others were camped out in the hills at one of the new mining districts which were opening up over southwestern New Mexico. Probably Billy had gone out to work the mine about which he had written so proudly in the preceding letter.

Dear dear Mother, I am well now and doing well and looking out for old Victorio to charge us at any minute in the world. He has got 1400 Indians with him now and he is in on the war path and his sign is just as thick all around as it can be and he said he was going to give us a call. You can see their fires every night. There is about 60 of us and no guns in our outfit atall, none but 4 guns [long guns or rifles] and I have got 1 of them and a good pistol and about 18,200 rounds of cartriges. . . . We are now building a breastwork to fight them and so I think we will get out all rite. The Indians has killed about 30 men on the 10th of this month and they are killing every thing they can strike. . . . Well so Ma write soon and tell me. . . . if they got a Bill against me or not and if not I am coming back home. . . . Write shore so I will write soon again and tell you how [I'm] getting along. . . . Tell all howdy for me and kiss Ace and Sister for me and tell them to be good Children. Well good bye to all.

Direct yours to Shakespeare, Grant Co. N. M.

William Grounds

There is no further record of Billy's mine (in fact it was never even formally filed by him as a claim) but it is definite that the Apaches did not get his scalp while he was working on it. Whether they killed any of the other sixty men with Billy or even attacked the camp, we do not know.

THERE was a long gap in the correspondence—from May 1880 to December 12, 1880—and while it is quite possible some letters of this period have been lost, it seems from the desperate tone of Billy's next letter that it had been a long time since the Shakespeare post office had contained a letter from his family.

Dear dear Mother, Well Ma I thought I would try and write you all a few lines to inform you that I am still on foot and all right yet Ma. I haven't heard a word from you all in so long that I have got to believe that you all are dead. Ma, how I love to see you all and know how you all are getting along and know where Alf is and know if he is dead or not and how Felix is and how he is getting along.

Alf and Felix were Billy's older brothers. Felix, nine years older, was a steady young man but Alfred, eight years older, was quite a roamer and worried his family considerably by disappearing for long periods of time and sending no word home. However, Alfred managed to live a year longer than poor Billy at that, but died in a gunfight following an argument at the old White House, near present-day Buckhorn, New Mexico.

Well Ma I wish that I was with you and little Ace and Bird. I am just in hell all the time about you all and I am coming home if they hang me in 24 hours. Ma if you can sell out, you sell and I come back after you and if you were out here you could do better. . . . Shore you can get 4 dollars per day here for work and you can't get but 50 cents [there].

On the other side of this page he started a letter to his little half-brother Ace, or Aset as Billy sometimes called him, who was ten or eleven years old at this time.

Dear Dear little brother, Well Aset if you were with me I would be all right. Well you must take good care of your self and your little sister and your mama and be a good boy until I come home again and don't get into nothing.

Billy then speaks again to his mother without making a new salutation.

Ma for God Sake write as soon as you get this and tell me all of the news and tell me if Alf is dead or not and where he is at and if all [the] folks is well or not and Ma Kiss Aset and Bird for me and don't forget to write to me.

Mr. W M Grounds

Direct your letters to Shakespeare P O Grant Co. N. M.

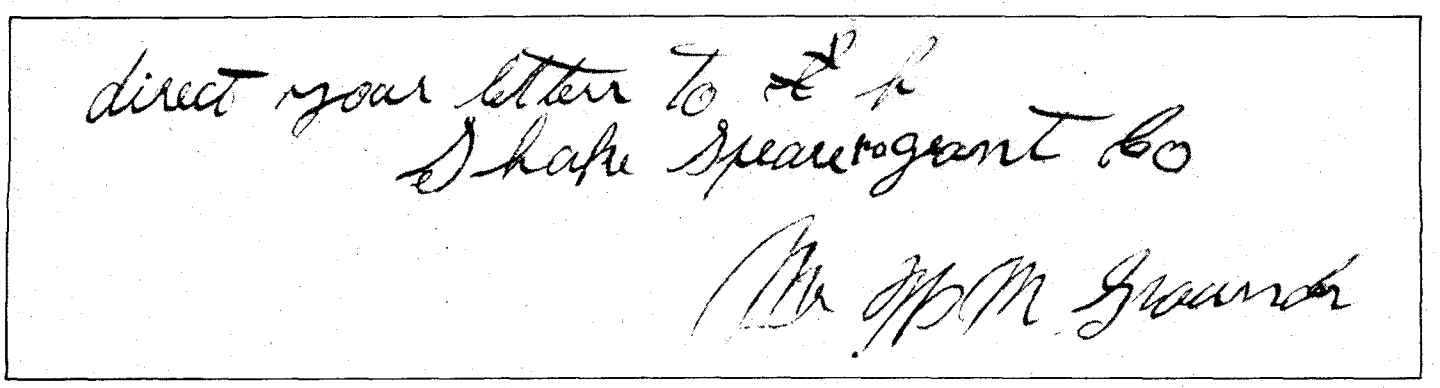
THAT IS ALL of the story of Billy Grounds that can be told in his own words. If there were other, later letters they have been lost or destroyed and I could not locate them. It would seem from the tone of the last letter that there had already been a break in the correspondence. Did Billy's mother move from one place to another so that his letters did not reach her for a long time, or had someone carried unpleasant gossip back to Texas causing her to grow angry with her son and quit writing him? Did Billy, lonely and hurt because there was no word from his beloved family, take to bad companions and worse occupations because he felt little to hold him back? We probably will never know.

Soon after the last letter was written, Billy must have left Shakespeare and drifted over the line to Arizona where he stayed around the new towns of Tombstone and Charleston, and it was there he gained a certain fame. He either traveled to Arizona with Zwing Hunt, or if the letters were correct and Hunt was not with him at Shakespeare, then they were reunited in Arizona, for in those last years the names Zwing Hunt and Billy Grounds are almost always linked. Hunt was at least a few years older than Billy and, though the Tombstone *Epitaph* referred to Hunt as a man of great courage, there was apparently little else to recommend him.

Not much exists in written records for tracing Hunt and Billy for the next fourteen months, but legend and story are full of their exploits. It seems to be agreed that they worked as freighters or teamsters for an undetermined length of time before branching out into other activities. Then, as the story goes, they—along with other outlaws—ambushed a train of Mexican smugglers in Skeleton Canyon, killed the smugglers, and took the mules which were loaded with *aparejos* of silver dollars. There is also a story of a raid into Mexico where the boys robbed a church, took a golden virgin and a box of diamonds.

It is difficult to imagine the boy who begged his mother to "Kiss Ace and Bird for me," sitting behind a rock and shooting down unarmed men, or robbing a

William Grounds' signature and return address as it appeared on the last letter to his mother.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church of its treasures. Time and circumstances do change men, but this seems a rather drastic switch in character.

Cattle rustling was something else—even the most respected cattlemen occasionally acquired a few of their neighbor's cows, perhaps by accident since a brand *might* be dim or difficult to read. And there is evidence that Billy and Zwing, in the fall of 1881, stole some thirty head of cattle from Persley and Woolf who had a ranch in the Sulphur Springs Valley. William Breakenridge, deputy sheriff in Cochise County, said that Woolf came to Tombstone to get a warrant and together they trailed the missing cattle to Charleston, finding them in a corral where they had been sold to a butcher. The thieves were gone but from the description given, Breakenridge seemed satisfied they were Zwing Hunt and Billy Grounds. The two were never arrested according to Breakenridge, since they went to Mexico.

THERE is no further concrete information on the pair's whereabouts until March 1882 when the tragic finale of their story was written up at some length in the Tombstone *Epitaph*. The edition of March 27 contained the first installment: "About twenty minutes after eight on Saturday evening, Messrs Austin, Cheyney, Hunt and Peel, were sitting in the office of the Tombstone Mill and Mining Company at Millville, all being connected with the company in various capacities. Mr. Peel was outside of a counter that runs through the center of the office and he sat close to the door. All others were behind the counter, Mr. Austin being directly in front of the door. A fumbling at the doorknob was first noticed, and then a heavy rap, probably given with the butt of a gun. Instantly the door was flung wide open and a man entered with a rifle presented, and was immediately followed by another who brought his rifle down as he entered.

"Almost in the same moment both rifles were discharged, one at Mr. Peel, who was shot through the body near or through the heart, and at such close range that his clothes were set on fire. He died without uttering a sound or making a motion. . . . The second rifle was aimed at Mr. Austin, but the slight difference in time of firing caused by the delay of the second assailant, who probably had flung the door back, gave the three gentlemen behind the counter time to drop, and the shot missed, burying itself in the wall. Instantly both assailants fled.

"They had a confederate hold their horses a few hundred yards from the office and succeeded in getting away before the alarm could be given. No order to 'hold up' was given and no word spoken; the whole affair passing without a sound. . . . assassins . . . masked with handkerchiefs and the only one who was well seen wore a white hat that he lost on the way to the horses.

"No attempt at robbery was made and the motive for the assault is a mystery. . . ."

Soon warrants for the arrest of Zwing Hunt and Billy Grounds were issued. The exact evidence which led to these warrants is somewhat hazy and there are certain questions which occur to the careful reader of the news stories. For instance, what was the identity of the third man who held the horses while the other two did the shooting? This does not seem to be answered and if the *Epitaph* were to print the same story today it would be loaded with the word "alleged." But since this was 1882, newspapers were not so cautions and Hunt and Grounds were already tried and found guilty according to the *Epitaph* of April 1.

DESPERATE FIGHT
Two Cow-Boy Rustlers Come to Grief And a Good Man Killed In Enforcing The Law

"About seven o'clock last evening, Mr. E. A. Harley, deputy sheriff in charge of the office in the absence of Sheriff Behan received word that two notorious characters for whom warrants were lying in the sheriff's office, named Billy Grounds, Alias "Billy the Kid," and Zwing Hunt, would be within eight or ten miles of town during the night or early this morning. Upon receipt of this information Mr. Harley ordered Deputy Sheriff Breakenridge to organize a posse and start about one or two o'clock so as to be on the ground at an early hour in the morning in order to make the arrests, which Mr. Harley thought might be done by four men without resistance. By nine o'clock Deputy Sheriff Breakenridge had his posse, consisting of Jack Young, E. H. Allen and John A. Gillespie, ready for action, and at the appointed hour they started on their mission. . . .

"The party arrived at Chandler's milk ranch just as the rosy streaks of the morning were heralding the near approach of the glorious orb of day, but before there was sufficient light to see objects at any considerable distance away . . . they rode boldly up to near the house where they dismounted and one of the party rapped at the door which summons was followed by asking who was in the house. The answer came, 'Those who belong here,' or something to that effect. . . . Thinking that possibly the parties they wanted might be at the other house, Mr. Young and another one started down. . . . About this time the door [of the first house] was opened and a man by the name of Lewis, a teamster who was staying overnight there, stepped out, immediately followed by Hunt who commenced firing. . . . Hunt shot Gillespie through the left temple, when he fell dead in his tracks. He then fired at Mr. Allen, the ball passing through his coat on top of the right shoulder, causing a slight crease in the side of his neck. Allen then blazed away and shot Hunt through the breast, the ball coming out of his back. Hunt must have fired several shots at Breakenridge who had taken refuge behind a large oak tree almost directly opposite the door, for several bullets were found in the tree after the battle was over. In the meantime and a few seconds after Hunt opened the bat-

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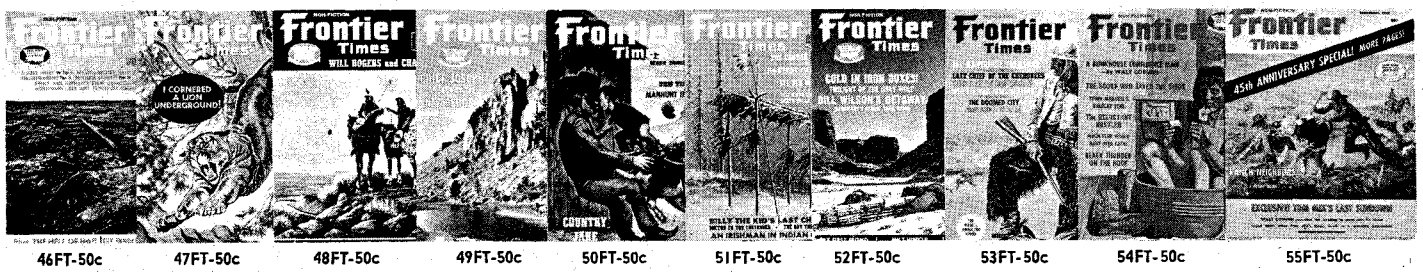

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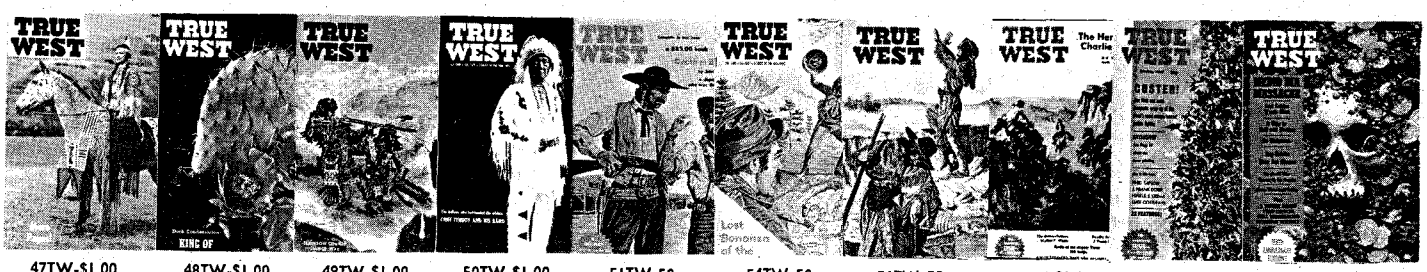

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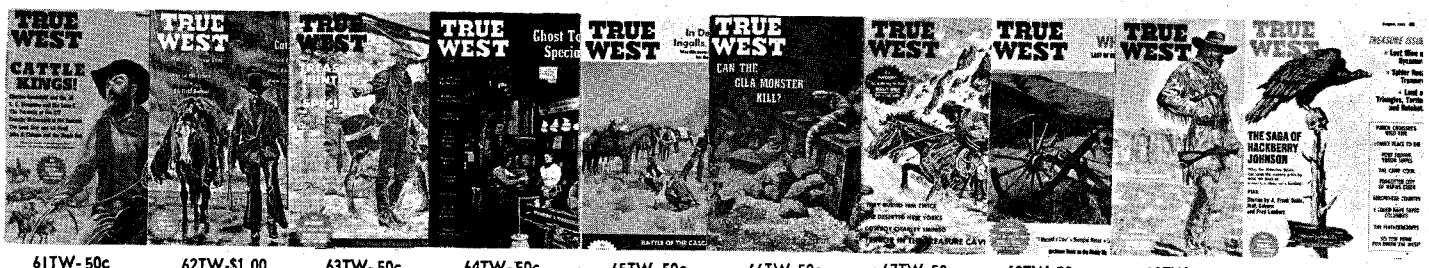

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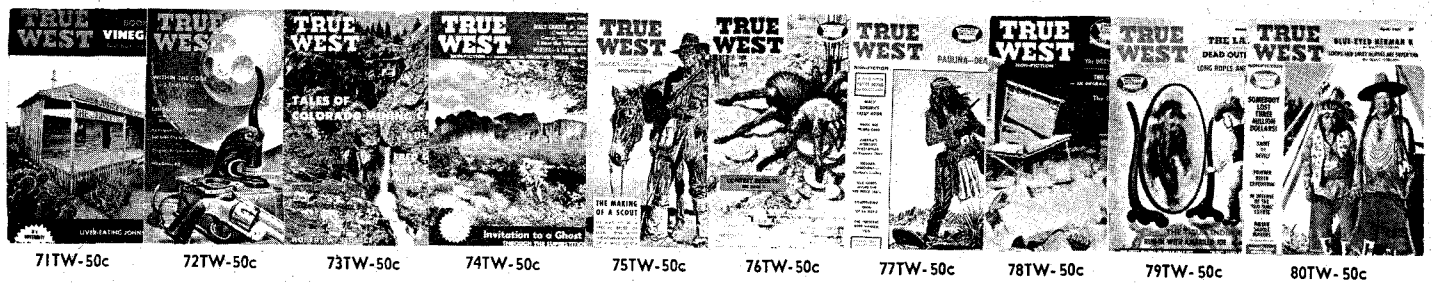

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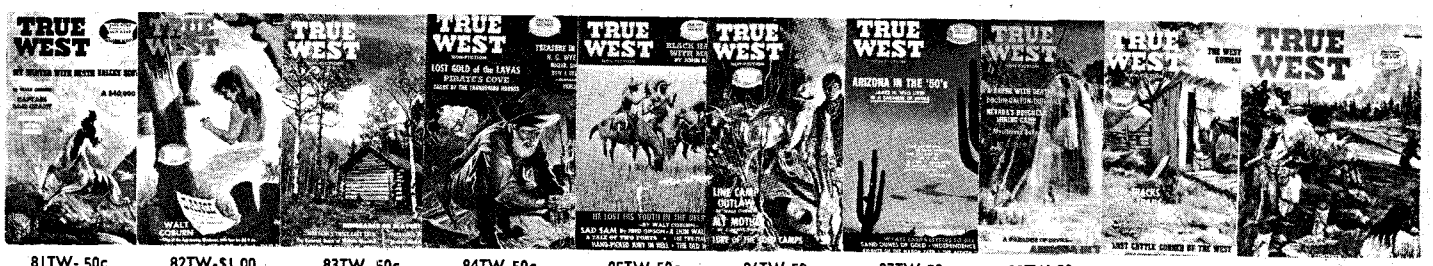

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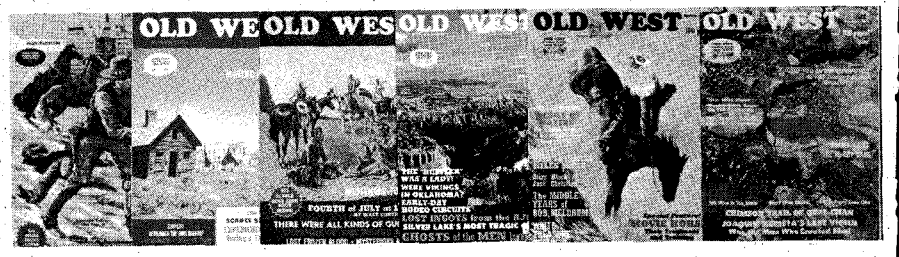

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tle, Grounds came out, and Breakenridge blazed away at him with his shot-gun and was so fortunate as to put a full charge of buckshot into his head which laid him out."

The *Epitaph* continued with the details of Hunt's capture. When the smoke had cleared there were two possemen wounded and one dead; Zwing Hunt was shot through the lung and young Billy Grounds had a head wound from which he died in a few hours.

IT WOULD seem our story should now come to an end. Our hero, if one can view poor homesick Billy as a hero, is dead and his *compadre* lies wounded and under arrest. But this is a story which has many postscripts.

Two weeks later, on April 28, 1882, the *Epitaph* printed an account of Zwing Hunt's escape from the hospital where he had been slowly convalescing under little or no guard. And a month later there appeared an account of Zwing Hunt's death as told by his brother—the man who had come out from his home in Texas and arranged for Hunt's escape. The Hunt brothers had been camping in the Chiricahua Mountains while Zwing recovered his strength, and were attacked by Indians one morning. Zwing fell dead with four bullets in him, and his brother Hugh, barely escaping, rode to the nearest army post to give the alarm. Ten cavalrymen returned to the scene of the fight with Hugh Hunt and helped him bury his brother's body, carving the name and date on a large tree.

Now, surely the story should end, with both of the boys dead and buried. But yet another postscript must be added because somehow that dream of wealth and security which Billy Grounds so fondly cherished is more tenacious of life than Billy himself, and it goes on and on.

The story is told differently by different people but seems to generally go like this:

Zwing Hunt was not really dead. The story told by his brother was only a ruse to throw off pursuit and the body which was buried belonged to someone else. Zwing actually returned to Texas and before he died there peacefully in his bed, told his family about a wonderful treasure which he and Billy had buried after they had robbed the smugglers in Skeleton Canyon. Somewhere in a canyon near Davis Mountain may lie a fortune in gold and silver and diamonds. The family of Billy Grounds, in searching through the possessions of Billy's mother found, they say, confirmation of the existence of this treasure and the spot where it was buried. The mother had refused to search for or even talk of this fortune because, she said, it was "blood money."

And so the search goes on through the years. It is not easy or simple, for with all the rugged peaks in southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona, there is not one which is now named Davis and few clues to tell which might have been called that in 1882. And after the searcher locates the mountain he must then find the right canyon and the correct spot.

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One clue perhaps is a statement by Lorenzo Walters in *Tombstone's Yesterday*. "In Cochise County [Arizona] the outlaw element was distributed around at various well-known camps, the most important of which were: Rustler Mountain Camp, Double 'Dobe Camp, Rucker Cañon Camp, Davis Mountain Camp . . . and many other smaller camps . . . along the border where Mexican smugglers could be intercepted. . . ."

One bit of concrete evidence which serves to confirm this long-lived dream of Billy's in the minds of hopeful treasure hunters, was the rotting leather sack filled with Mexican silver dollars which was found in the Animas Valley by cowboys in the early years of this century. It was hailed by believers as one sack which was dropped or forgotten by Zwing and Billy shortly after the robbery. Skeptics snorted that this was the one and only sack which ever existed. There is not much use in arguing with either side in this controversy. After all, as someone said, a treasure is rather like a religion, you either believe or you don't.

Arizona's "Lost Cabin" Mines

(Continued from page 13)

that two men worked it. This location was known as early as 1880, but no definite year is given as to when the mine was first discovered—or what came out of it. The shaft was deliberately filled up, and dump material used to conceal it. Today only the outline of the mouth exposes the shaft. Many prospectors believe that considerable values still remain to be discovered, for often such mines were blasted shut or camouflaged, their discoverers planning to return some day and work them again.

Back in 1930 while deer hunting, Charley Halliday happened onto the site of a dump near an old cabin. The broken rocks were shiny and as pretty as a rainbow. He gathered a sackful of them, as much as he could carry down the slope to his pickup truck.

The rocks were shipped to his mother in South Dakota. She used most of them to decorate the bottom of a long glass goldfish tank. When two professors from an Iowa college, friends of the family, came to visit and were intrigued by the vari-colored stones, she gave them a few. The next week they returned, highly excited.

"Write your son in Arizona to file a claim on that ground. These specimens are rich in platinum and gold!" one exclaimed.

Informed by telephone by his mother, Halliday grew equally excited but he couldn't return to the lost cabin mine. Guessing at its general location was the best he could do. Finally Wilbur Wolfington, county courthouse custodian, claimed he had been there several times and felt confident of being able to go straight to it. For years afterwards both men, together and separately, hunted the lost cabin without success.

IN 1883 James T. Munds homesteaded in a park south of Flagstaff later to be named for him. Munds found a pine pole cabin, rotted and fallen into a heap. Curious about it, for this early inhabitant had done no farming, he made inquiries and was told that a gray-whiskered prospector called Jones had mined somewhere around the park. Nowhere in the surrounding forest could a shaft or tunnel be located, however.

When it developed that Jones had packed silver ore on mules to a Globe smelter, the theory arose that he had not mined in the park but on nearby Mormon Mountain, a mysterious hulk where many men found and lost rich silver lodes. Munds continued searching the park.

Only once did tangible evidence of a mine appear. In 1899 A. L. (Al) Sims discovered among the bones of dead mules on the mesa above Lake Mary, a few hundred pounds of 65% silver ore. It was believed to have come from Munds Park, being just off the trail leading southwest in that direction.

After this spurt of excitement died down, a prospector found a shaft either caved in or blasted, half a mile below Munds Park. So eroded was the dump that it was impossible to learn much of the mine's character. A group of men started cleaning out the shaft. Twenty feet down they encountered the first timbering. Then water rose so fast they were unable to pump it out and the project was abandoned.

WHEN Mormons arrived in Flagstaff in 1881 to hack ties for the incoming railroad, one of them found an old one-room cabin in Silver Peso Basin. It was so called because twenty Mexican pesos were scattered around on the dirt floor.

Silver Peso Basin lay south of Fort Valley, where the Mormons from Tuba City and Utah had established themselves in a fort-like stockade. From some source, according to the Lee and Farnsworth men who were part of the tie cutting company, it was learned that a rich silver mine had been found in the basin as early as 1873. Four men had made the discovery and two of them took out four muleloads of silver to distant Hardyville on the upper Colorado River. During their absence Havasupai Indians killed the two remaining behind. The Indians tossed their bodies in the mine, filled it up, and disguised the opening with rocks.

Two months later their returning partners were also ambushed by the same Indians. The Havasupais did not want white men in their hunting grounds around the San Franciscos.

Mooney Trail came up from the Verde Valley along the east side of Sycamore Canyon. Named for its builder, James Mooney, killed near Grand Canyon in 1880, it gave ready access to north-central Arizona. While laying out the trail with a party of prospectors, Mooney came onto a very old log cabin on a prominent ridge south of Casner Mountain.

In time this place became known as Buck Ridge. A sheepman repaired and used it; later when all that area came under the control of the Forest Service, rangers occasionally stored supplies there.

It was never known who built the cabin.

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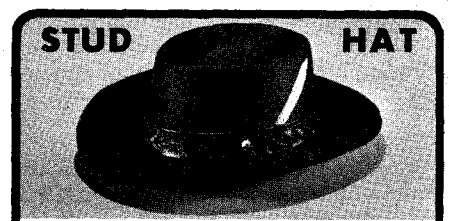

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Somewhat larger and better constructed than those thrown up by trappers and prospectors, the cabin definitely served some particular purpose. After gold-bearing milk white quartz was found scattered nearby, the inevitable conclusion was that a mine had been worked in the vicinity.

Assays showed the quartz to be rich in gold and silver. The chunks picked up were believed to have been lost off pack animals taking the ore to a smelter. Fragments of the gold-bearing quartz were found all the way to the north rim of Verde Valley overlooking the Jerome copper mines.

Zeke Miller and Joe Hammond discovered a dome-shaped uplift of the same quartz. They followed it down, sure of a rich strike. Then the lead petered out in a beet-shaped deposit. There wasn't any more but they took out $2,200 in gold from this strangely shaped pocket below Casner Mountain. The partners hunted all around it and spent two years in Sycamore Canyon. They did not find another outcropping of similar quartz.

ONE of the inveterate hunters of this period was Cliff Nelson. Despite repeated failures around Buck Ridge he remained convinced that plenty of gold would be found there somewhere. Nelson was a very old man in 1940 when he brought 1,100 pounds of gold ore to Flagstaff by hired truck. Not even the driver knew where it came from, though he had loaded it at Buck Ridge. Nelson received a check for $2,900 when the gold was sold.

Soon the old man returned to the wilderness around Casner Mountain and Sycamore Canyon, and has never been seen or heard of since. Searchers still look for Nelson's lost mine.

If I were a prospector my selection of the most likely and valuable field to explore would be a little different. I believe the most important of these "mystery mines," or "lost prospects," was not a mine but a dry placer from which the first gold was recovered by pure accident.

One cold November day in 1904 George McCormick and William Beeson were returning to Flagstaff from Winslow, fifty-eight miles to the east. Half frozen by the cold wind whistling over the open country they halted inside a timber belt about twenty miles from town. While Beeson cared for the horses McCormick whacked off a few pieces of a tall pine stump to kindle a fire.

A heavy blow from his camp ax partly slit one side and a second broke the wood apart in brittle fragments because the stump was hollow inside. As McCormick bent over to pick up the pieces he stared right down on a handful of gold nuggets and the rotted remains of a buckskin pouch. At first he couldn't believe his senses. Then his yell brought Beeson running over.

The two men forgot their frostbite long enough to recover the nuggets, which varied from pea size to that of a marble. McCormick and Beeson chopped the stump apart and even dug out the roots, but there was no more gold. After reaching Flagstaff they sold the gold (which weighed twenty pounds) and split the proceeds.

The cache kept bothering McCormick. Where had the gold come from? In the late spring of the following year he went back alone, hauling his camp gear in a wagon—and paying particular attention to old stumps. One day McCormick pushed through a thick clump of timber into a small glade. In it stood a cedar pole cabin. The flat dirt roof had fallen in and the low walls were coming apart.

Curiously, the poles had not been cut nearby. The surrounding trees had obviously been left to conceal the cabin. Axed elsewhere, the poles were carried in. The cabin was so old that McCormick concluded the gold surely had originated in this area. But where?

Extensive searching revealed nothing. Then one day he started pulling up bunch grass to feed his horses. The way he told it afterwards, he was pulling bunch grass about a hundred yards from the discovery stump. As he shook the dirt and gravel from the roots, three pea-sized gold nuggets dropped to his feet. This was the source of the cached gold!

Elated, McCormick pulled up grass around trees and over three acres of ground. He found some more small nuggets but not any as large as those taken from the tree stump. No water was available to operate a washer, so he dry panned the gravelly surfaces. This was slow, back-breaking labor and he probably lost the fine particles.

Only in that one place did McCormick recover gold. The ground cover was a fill, overlaying lava or malpais. In all he got nearly one hundred pounds. It was enough to enable him to buy some property and continue prospecting.

Little by little news of McCormick's find leaked out. The story about the stump had never been kept secret, both he and Beeson telling their friends about their experience. By the time McCormick made his cleanup, several parties were haunting the junipers. They found nothing and never saw the old cabin; McCormick had used the wood for his campfires.

He always did believe other spots in the same region contained gold. Much of his time during ensuing years was spent inspecting likely ground. His two growing sons also prospected over the same forest plateau but were never lucky enough to come up with anything.

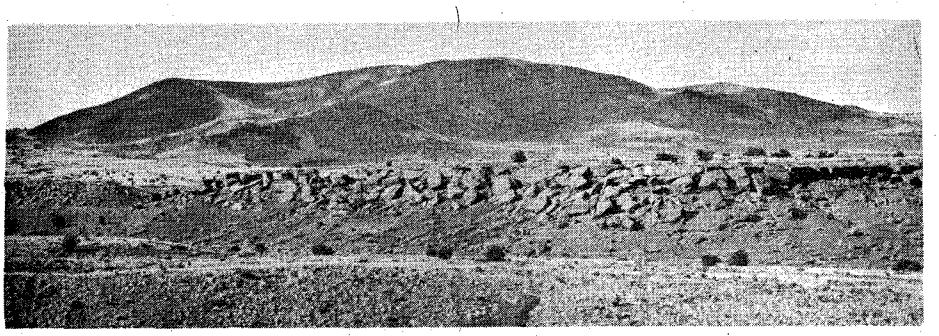
Dyed in the wool, never give-up prospectors still believe nuggets can be found there. Every year at least two or three search as far south as the Mogollon Rim. Men using electronic devices guaranteed by the manufacturers to disclose deposits of gold have given it a try—no dice and they blame instruments' failures on cosmic conditions. This is the bane of mineral locators.

The general area can be reached via new U. S. Interstate Highway 40, eighteen miles east of Flagstaff to a roadside place called Toonerville. Just west of the store a dirt road branches south. A mile from the fence cattleguard a right turn leads into the juniper forest, part of which has been removed. Right there is where McCormick got his gold at grass roots.

The Doney Crater mine has been closed, and National Monument rangers refuse to allow anyone to inspect it. The Munds Park site is on private land.

I have seen ore that runs high in platinum and gold and cannot account for its being where found. I have never heard of any appreciable amount of platinum found anywhere in Arizona except at Kingman—but could be.

Doney Crater Mountain on the Little Colorado River, where Ben Doney tunneled into the mountain some 600 feet.



He Killed a Cagey Outlaw

(Continued from page 29)

got the wolf, too, and there was a lot of satisfaction in that.

"In 1919 there had been seventeen wolves operating in the Judith Basin area. They made their forays and killed lots of cattle. By 1924 they had been shot, trapped or poisoned down to three—a pair and the lone white wolf. A concentrated effort was made to 'get' those three.

"THE female was the first to go. I got her. She took a dose of poison at the head of Willow Creek. Barney Brannen, the government trapper, got the male of the pair in Pig Eye Basin at the upper end of the Judith River—also by poison. If you could say that an animal commits suicide, it sure seems like he did. For several days after the female died, he hung around where his mate had been poisoned; then he quit looking, went around the mountain directly to the poisoned horse, took on a feed, curled up and died. It was that simple with the pair.

"That left the white wolf alone—the

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only active wolf in the state doing damage. Government officials and ranchers wanted him killed. M. G. Daniel—he was the trapper for the Biological Survey—put out a line of sixty-five traps trying to get the killer. I heard that his job depended on getting that white wolf.

"Like the rest of the ranchers, Joe Williams, who had once been a government trapper, and I talked about the white wolf. We both believed that he would never be poisoned. We agreed that the only way he would ever be downed was by rifle shot, and the only way to get close enough for that was to have dogs that would fight and pester him until a gunman could get near enough to shoot. I trapped a lot in those days. I had a couple of good trapline dogs, and I decided that I'd train them for the wolf hunt. I soon let them know that any place we were or any time that they caught the scent of a coyote or wolf, they were to follow that. When I said, Go get 'em, I meant just that.

"I studied the renegade's habits. He ranged from the Belts to the Highwoods. He'd make a run during the night with a side foray for a kill. When he had eaten his fill, he'd go into the thick brush and bed down for a sleep. The dogs and I crossed his path many times. We had found his kill and his empty bed. Any time we followed our trap line, we were looking for the white wolf. Mike was a little red Irish Terrier. Nick was a big black and white shepherd.

"I was milking my cows on the 8th of May in 1930, when my neighbor, Earl Neill, came over, all excited. 'I saw the white wolf go 'round the mountain toward Pig Eye Basin,' he said. 'Let's go head him off.'

"I thought about the wolf's habits and I stuck to my theory. I thought—foray, feed, bed down, 'Let's not be in a hurry,' I said. 'I'll finish my milking and eat breakfast.'

"I took my time and my neighbor was getting pretty impatient. He didn't know whether I was figuring it right. But we planned our hunt together. When we got to the area where Earl had seen the wolf head for, he went on around the mountain. I took my dogs and we worked the heavy timber patches.

"Mike and Nick worked the brush up the wind. I was with them. We all passed above the small patch of scrub fir where the wolf lay bedded. We almost missed him. Deer above us on the hillside attracted the dogs' attention for a moment. I cut over the ridge and doubled back below the brush, knowing my own scent had carried on away and was now downhill from the wolf if he was bedded there. Then the dogs caught the scent of the wolf. No longer were they interested in the deer above. Mike took the track he found.

"'Go get him,' I said. Mike was off and Nick was after him.

"Suddenly all hell broke loose in the brush above me. A white wolf, angry at being jumped in his bed, and a white dog hanging to his tail—that long bushy tail—came tumbling out like an agitated sheet flapping in the wind. Nick hung on to that tail for dear life. Mike tormented the wolf. Down the hill they rolled below me.

"Suddenly the chance came. The white wolf backed up against a windfall and the dogs were both out of range. I raised my .30-30 to shoot. But I couldn't help it—first I thought, 'What a shame to kill such a smart fellow.' Then I squeezed the trigger on my old Winchester and the wolf went down paralyzed. He was shot an inch below the eye. The bullet had penetrated the base of the brain. He rolled back under the low limbs of a fir tree. He couldn't move, but he was still alive. From under that tree he snarled at me. He was really mad but he couldn't do anything about it. Nick and Mike took stations beside our victim.

"I whistled in the empty shell and sat down to wait for Earl. I wanted him to see the beast alive, and he was paralyzed so that I was sure he couldn't move. I had a lot of confidence in those dogs, too. Finally I heard Earl call and I shouted to him.

"'Did I hear you shoot?' Earl asked

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The white wolf on display in the Stanford, Montana courthouse.

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right away when he came up.

His back was to the wolf, and it was half-concealed less than fifteen feet away under the fir's low-hanging limb.

" 'Yeah,' I said as casually as I could. 'I thought it was time to go home, so I shot at a porcupine.'

" 'Too bad we didn't find him,' said Earl. He got ready to light his pipe. He always struck his match on his pipe bowl, and as he turned sideways to do that, he saw the half-dead animal.

" 'Why, why,' he stammered, 'that's him!' The wolf bared his teeth. If he could have snarled, he would have.

"Earl was sure surprised. Then his surprise gave way to pleasure. I finished the wolf off by a shot to break his neck, but not to tear his hide. Then we pulled the white wolf from his death bed. We took him to Stanford and we showed him off on the streets all afternoon. There was a crowd around him all day.

"That carcass was as big as a full-grown calf. With the tail it measured six feet. The brush was nearly twenty inches long. We judged him to be about eighteen years old by his teeth, but he was a beautiful animal. I don't know what they did when they mounted him—waited too long or used too strong a solution or what. Anyway he was a pretty mangy looker when they put him up in the courthouse. Course he was old and he'd had a busy life.

"I don't think anybody really wanted to estimate the damage he had done in his lifetime. He had sure been an arrogant fellow. He took just what he wanted of life by his own master strategy. I was mighty proud of my dogs to have cornered him, and I am mighty proud to have pulled the bead on him even if it was thirty-five years ago."

No Wonder They Are Dying!

(Continued from page 3)

zine being on their racks.

Now this doesn't sound so bad at first look. Many people think that a publisher gets 50¢ for a 50¢ magazine. He gets, or got, 26¢ per copy *sold*. If he sells only 50% of the magazines distributed, that cuts him down to 13¢ per copy. Now when you take 5¢ off that 13¢, it means the difference between staying alive and dying! Remember that the publisher has paid postage on *all* the magazines he has sent out, he has paid printing costs, paper, etc. on *all* these copies but he gets paid *only* for what is sold. There is the national distributor, the city wholesaler, and the retailer who must have their part, naturally.

Brother! What have I gotten into? It would take twenty books to explain the complicated publishing business and I tackled it here with a few paragraphs. My middle name should be "Dumb" instead of "Hosstail." We have got to go a little further, however, to be perfectly fair.

THE chain grocery stores, chain drug stores, chain drive-ins, etc. can make more money from the same size space if they would clear away magazines completely and put in drugs, groceries, etc. in place of the magazine racks. Therefore, if they can make an extra 10% of cover price per copy sold, it sort of evens things up. This plan started several years ago but is just now mushrooming. It has grown to the point that a publisher must take his magazines from the chain stores or raise the cover price. Some magazines seem to be able to raise the cover price along with inflation and get by with it. However, there are so many people on fixed incomes that there is going to be a point of no return eventually. It will narrow down to the hard-core readers who can afford to pay premium prices for magazines, and the fixed income people will have to buy less or none at all.

As I mentioned, this was only one of the things that affected the decision of *Look* and *Life* to call it quits. The mass circulated magazines depend mostly on that beautiful four-color advertising, as you very well know. Some of them have paid, and are paying—actually *paying* traveling crews for subscriptions! This is to hold up their circulation so they can get that fine color advertising. However, when there is a recession or the economic picture looks doubtful, advertisers pull in their ears, and it leaves the magazine that depends on advertising almost totally in a wide open space with nowhere to go! That is why the specialized magazine has been able to survive—income derived from subscriptions and, in certain cases, newsstand sales—not ads alone.

Making nothing on subscriptions needs a little clarifying. After you have received two or three renewal notices with colored brochures enclosed, postage paid envelopes, and all the other efforts magazines use to persuade you to renew—well, that magazine isn't going to make anything on a one-year renewal. After six to eight notices, they will lose money. If a magazine turns over a subscription solicitation to field organizations, it gets paid 10% on the dollar for subscriptions. This hardly pays for making the plates—much less servicing a full year's subscription! So, they *must* depend upon something else. Magazines almost always lose money on soliciting new subscriptions by mail.

When I was publishing *Southern Sportsman*, and later, *Western Sportsman*, I had to bring each issue "out of the fire" by dictating my heart out to advertisers. There was a huge empty feeling in my stomach after we put each issue to bed. I had a nervous breakdown in my late twenties. I swore that if I could find anything else on earth in magazine form that didn't require so much advertising, that would be for me. I found it in *True West* and the magazines that followed. Actually, we could have gotten along in those days with not one inch of advertising. It was a TREMENDOUS feeling of freedom, relief and new life. Now, the gate is slowly closing again.

Back to the Retail Display Allowance. Of course, it is hurting us! In fact, we have already withdrawn *Frontier Times*

"Sometimes I feel that when my ole paw left me this outfit, he jist sentenced me to a lifetime of hard labor."

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and *Old West.* We are keeping *True West* on it for comparison purposes. Chain stores represent about 25% of total magazine outlets now. But it is the story of the disappearing corner grocery. The independent outlets are gradually being taken over by the chains. But bless his heart, the independent owner is keeping us alive for now!

Our biggest income by far is from newsstand sales. I think some of the chains will keep us on since at least a few of them look upon their newsstand department as a public service for their customers. But gradually, as chains root out the independent retailer (tobacco stores, drug stores, drive-ins, etc.) it will eventually become a 50-50 proposition. Finally it may go all the way—total "big." That is when no magazine can exist on the newsstands without paying the tax of 10% of their copy price merely for the chains to handle them. Also, since the ball is rolling, there will be other kickbacks along the way. This, along with other rising costs, will kill magazine after magazine.

MOST publications, of course, will merely go up on their cover prices. Some in the Western field have already gone up to 60¢. Most have cut pages to 64—"66" means that they count the first inside page as No. 3. I'm sure that many magazines can get by on raising their cover price every time increases in cost come along; however, I think the Western field is considerably different since there are many old-timers among our readers and so many people in the fixed income bracket. Therefore, I have chosen to pull out two of our magazines rather than raise the cover price. WHAT DO YOU THINK? As always, I am sharing our problems with our readers. We have people who will stay with us no matter what, but there are many more who can't afford to. I had to make the decision on *Frontier Times* and *Old West* before this information could reach you since newsstand costs were mushrooming so fast it was amazing. Now I am asking that you write in and express your views. In short, shall we go up to 60¢ on our cover price and stay in the chain stores?

One chain official wrote in part: "It seems to us that an increase in cover price would be justifiable, and, in our affluent society, that readers would not object to an increase." Maybe so. Perhaps I'm old-fashioned, but I still want to deliver "the best for less." I don't want to see the hard-pressed people forced to give up magazines they want badly because of the insane spiral for more, more, *more!* If this sounds corny these days—then that's what I am. And here is one old boy who isn't going to the government for help. That increases *all* our costs.

Chain stores have grown and prospered over being able to offer products for less than you could buy the same item at a little single independent store. Isn't it ironic that we can sell our magazines at still a small profit at the independents for 50¢ per copy but would have to go up to 60¢ if we remain in the chain stores?

From your standpoint, if you will ask

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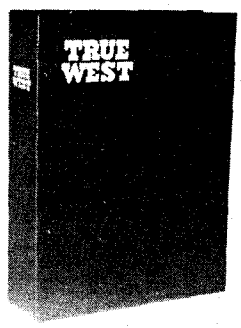

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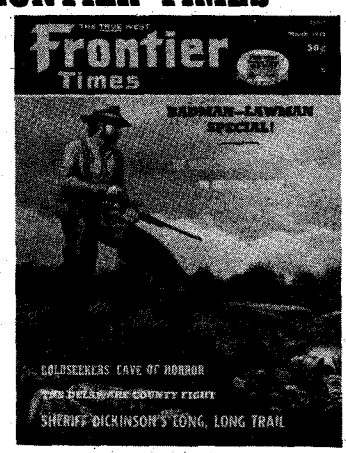

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the *manager* of any store, where you have been buying *Frontier Times* and *Old West*, why they no longer handle these titles, this will be of GREAT help. Those who are handling magazines as a service to their readers will probably keep us on. Those who act for money only will not. That leaves a pretty small margin since it seems that *money* is what almost *always* has ruled over these types of decisions.

If there is no action on the part of the manager, if you would ask him for the name of the man who supervises magazines sales for the chain (he most probably will live in another city), get his address and write him asking *why*, it would help tremendously. This will show us one thing in a hurry—how many of the old-time readers we still have—or, new readers who believe in what we are doing and are willing to go out of their way to see that it is done and continued.

More and more we are having a society of "Let George do it." Also, more and more, there are less and less Georges! I do this, and I believe if all of us would write our representatives, senators and other officials about things we do not like, BROTHER, what a different world it would be! The voice of the American people (and this may sound melodramatic but it is *true*) is the most powerful voice on earth—if folks would only shake off their lethargy and *use* it! But we don't. However, if we have a livable world in the future, we're going to *have* to.

I haven't spouted off this much in a mighty long time. I wonder how many people will actually finish this or even read it. I'll have a good idea about ten days after it appears!

I'll be talking to you again real soon and keeping you up on things as they happen. You have always liked this and, unless we have a completely different readership, you will tear into this like a biting sow and we'll get some action—one way or the other.

I should sign this "The Only Fool in the Publishing Business Who Dares To Say He Is Not Sweeping the Country with Tremendous Success and Has Problems Just Like Anybody Else."

Instead, I'll just say, see you later. —Hosstail.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 4)

the field of Western Americana," and no mistake about that.—Roy Wallace, 139 Shore Crescent, Shore Road, Belfast 15, Northern Ireland

On "Seaman's Rest" Story

My August issue of TRUE WEST arrived today and I lost no time in reading it thoroughly. The story on page 30, "The Girl Who Waited at Seaman's Rest," was of extra interest with its locale set in Tacoma, Washington, a port city of much importance. In all probability, my father who arrived on Puget Sound via some of the last full-rigged ships, may have known and respected the sailor's good friend, Mrs. Funnemark. Bachelor shipmates of his, who made Tacoma their port of call and with no settled addresses, used to visit in our home. As a child, I recall them telling of going for their mail to the home of a lady whose name escaped me. They never called it a "Mission" but it must have been the same benefactor who helped those Norse seamen keep in contact with the "Old Country" by mail.

My sincere appreciation to the authors for recording this bit of history, which gives another picture of Western pioneer life and settlement. Not all the old-timers can be categorized as landlubbers! Some veered westward in wagons while others ventured the seas; and we must trust our own TRUE WEST to scoop those voyaging stories!—Agnes Needham, Box 112, Tracyton, Washington 98393

More on Imperial Valley Flood

A couple of ending remarks on your story of the big flood of the Imperial Valley in 1906 (October 1971 TRUE WEST): On page 11, top photo, is a string of side-dump cars on the trestle in the 11000 numbered series. Forty-five years later we were still using these same cars to haul rock—we pulled ten loads of rock every Saturday. This practice had been going on all that time and finally stopped about 1955. We had about twenty-five of these old cars left and kept them at the old Burnes siding on the Gila River. Every Saturday we took ten or twelve empties up to be loaded during the week, and brought ten or twelve loads back to dump.

Another set of six of this same class dump car was kept on Levitt Siding on the Colorado River levee a few miles south of Yuma on the line to Sommerton. The Reclamation Bureau built this levee and the railroad on top of it. The government owned the levee but the Southern Pacific Railroad maintained the track and ran the trains. It was under the heading of the Yuma Valley Railroad but listed in our timetable as the Sommerton Branch of the Tucson Division (SP).

The Imperial Valley operation is on a parallel with the work at San Marcial, New Mexico, when the Rio Grande flooded the town in 1928-29. The Santa Fe Railroad lost everything and never rebuilt. The old town site is still under water and the levee still has to be worked on every year.—L. E. Broadstreet, Box 605, Central, New Mexico 88026

Sarah Brower

I have been working for some time now on a book dealing with the descendants of New York's legendary Anneke Jans Bogardus, of which the Brower family is one branch. I am particularly interested in Sarah Brower, a pioneer female detective who was born in New England but later settled in Indiana.

Would it be possible that some of your readers might have information on the background of the Browers and what became of Sarah after 1855?—E. C. Campbell, U. E., 260 King Street East, Saint John, N. B., Canada

Union Pacific Railroad Photo

Reference is made to the photograph of an Indian village of Shoshones on page 62 of the August issue, which picture is credited as a "Union Pacific R. R. Photo."

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Having greatly enjoyed a close friendship with Mr. Jackson during the last ten years of his life, I am deeply interested in everything by and about him. Perhaps your credit line has misled me, and is merely intended to show that the Union Pacific Railroad lent a print to you for publication. The photograph has been used many times and was the basis for a large oil painting by Mr. Jackson. It is used opposite page 366 in the 1925 edition of Alter's *James Bridger*, and on the margin Mr. Jackson wrote: "Photographed by me October 1870 for the U. S. Geological Survey—Wm. H. Jackson, New York City, March 31, 1933."—Elwood P. Bonney, 30 Edgewood Road, Madison, New Jersey 07940

The picture was one of several furnished by the author. The "Union Pacific R. R. Photo" credit was all that we were furnished. No photographer's name was given. We appreciate the information.

More On Frank James

The letter concerning Frank James in the August issue brought back memories of many years ago. My hometown of Shelton, Nebraska was a real live town and each year put on a two-or three-day race. Having a black pony that loved to run, I would enter and ride her myself. In this particular race Frank James, recently released from prison where he had served his time, was starting races to pick up a few dollars.

I had also ridden other race horses and had been instructed to get the jump on the others—consequently after calling me back for the third time, he yelled down from the stand, "If I have to call you back once more I will disqualify you from every race track in Nebraska!"

I got a poor start and came in second in a group of seven, losing to a boy from Wood River a few miles east of Shelton. His name was Watson (if I remember correctly) and he was riding a fast grey mare. I also recall that James did walk with a limp. If the stories I had read and things my father (who knew the whole bunch) told were true, the bullet through his leg should have been through his head.—H. V. Murphy, 8 East 3rd South Street, Green River, Wyoming 82935

The Snake Rebellion

In the October '72 issue is an article on the rebellion of the Snake Indians. That version of the Snakes differs radically from my own, which I agree is quite limited. I have just the word of one man.

In 1903 we held a string of cattle in the Creek Nation. The steers were kept in a pasture some ten or twelve miles above Red Fork on the Arkansas. I stayed most of the time in a camp at the edge of Red Fork where we held the cows, but I was in the upper camp off and on during the summer.

About a half a mile below our upper camp, lived a full-blood Creek named George Ireland. He lived on his allotment with his small family. He visited in our camp quite a bit. In fact, the two boys there bought butter and eggs from him and occasionally Mrs. Ireland would send them a dressed chicken. George told us that he belonged to the Snake clan of the Creeks. He said that the line that distinguished his group from the bulk of the Creeks was that they had not intermarried or mixed with any other race. They had kept their blood strains pure and his looks bore him out. He looked to be all Indian. Most all, or perhaps all, of the other Creeks that I remember seeing showed strains of Negro blood. It is, of course, an historical fact that the Creeks gave sanctuary to runaway slaves even before the so-called Five Civilized Tribes were moved from their natural habitat in the East to Indian Territory. George said that there were only about forty of the Snake pure-bloods left. He said that when any of them mixed with foreign blood, they were banned from the clan.

That article also mentions that the Snake Rebellion was put down by General Pleasant Porter. In 1903 Pleasant Porter was chief of the Creek tribe. I presume he was the same man. I never saw him, but he was related to an Indian named Yargee who lived in what would then be called a mansion a short distance out of Red Fork. Yargee had two boys. The oldest was named Van who was married and lived across the railroad track from our camp on the edge of Red Fork. We leased a small pasture from him where we kept our saddle horses. The other boy who was single was named Pleasant in honor of his uncle, Pleasant Porter. The elder Yargee was a member of the Creek council.

Pleas—we called him—worked for us that spring in sorting out our cattle, and again that fall when we were shipping out. He didn't need the money—he just liked to work cattle. The Yargee family was already rich in land and horses—I don't recall that they owned many cattle. They were also getting richer every day from oil royalties which were just getting started. Pleas was a fine looking fellow. He was a good cowhand and had some good horses besides quite a number of the original Indian ponies. We wintered two or three hundred steers in the Territory and Dixon Baird stayed with them. The spring of 1904 we shipped cattle from Texas to the Osage Nation and Dixon drove the steers over there. Pleas Yargee helped him make that drive.

In 1905 we were back in the Creek country but up above the mouth of the Cimarron bordering the Oklahoma Territory line. When we closed out that fall and I was ready to go back home to Texas, my father told me to stop off at Red Fork and try to buy a few head of those Indian ponies. If so, I was to bring them back up to our camp and we would put them with some of our own horses and ship them to Texas. For some reason, I did not get any ponies. I don't know if we failed to agree on the price or what happened. I took the train from there back home.

I stayed at the Yargee home that night. They were very fine people and gave me much better treatment than I thought I rated. Pleas was inclined to be wild and mean when under the influence. I never saw him without his gun. He was later killed by the owner and operator of some little one-horse, Wild West show.

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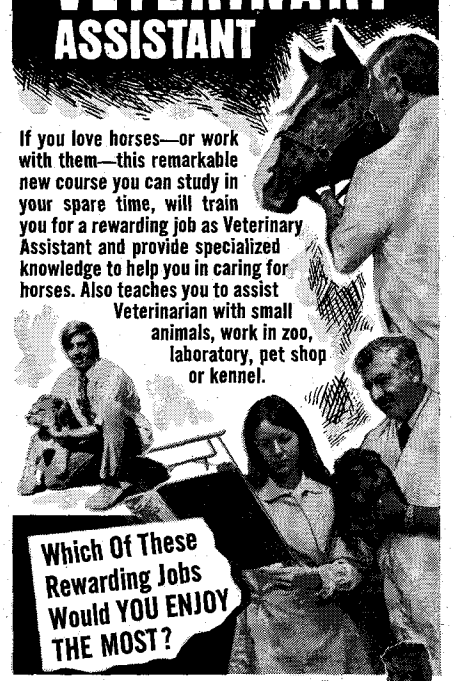

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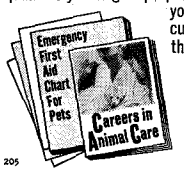

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I was told by a member of the jury that Pleas was on one of his tears and almost wrecked the show tent. When the owner tried to stop him, they got into a fight and the showman killed him. He was acquitted.—Walter Gann, 31662 Scenic Drive, South Laguna, California 92677

☆

I enjoy your magazines very much; have seen many articles in them about places and people I have known or know.

In the October TRUE WEST, the piece about Crazy Snake and the old federal jail at Muskogee, Oklahoma—or Indian Territory at that time—I remember the hanging and all. My father was U. S. jailer from the time it was built and on to statehood. Then he went to McAlester, Oklahoma as deputy U. S. marshal at the penitentiary. His name was W. A. (Gus) Lubbes. I can remember as a boy we kids would slip up and look through the posts in the old stockade and watch the hangings—until the guards spotted us. We sure enjoy the magazines.—F. W. Lubbes, Route 3, Jefferson, Texas 75657

Aztec Calendar Stone

Reference is made to the article "Mystery Tablet of the Big Bend" in your August 1972 issue, which mentions Roman coins found at Chattanooga, Inscription Rock on the Rio Puerco, and the Pariaba Stone with information that twelve men and three women "sacrificed a youth to the celestial gods and goddesses."

We find the Aztec and Mayan Indians of Central America and Mexico sacrificing warriors to celestial gods and goddesses. Their theocracies were ruled by astronomer-astrologer priests.

Mounds were constructed with their steep sides protected from erosion by rock facings. Later cut stone was added, with perhaps a temple on top. No one appears to associate the Aztecs with the Mound Builders of the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys.

The ancient Hebrews had a three-inch unit of measure which was four digits or one palm. It was a surprise to me to learn that the Aztec Calendar Stone is 13 feet or 156 inches in diameter and that they had a 52 year time cycle; 156 inches divided by 52 years equals 3 inches per year. Therefore, the basic unit of measure appears to be a three inch unit. Other information on the Calendar Stone bears this out.

The Aztec and Mayan civilizations were certainly influenced by information received from the Eastern Hemisphere.—Harley L. Lewis, Box 286, Lynchburg, Ohio 45142

Oxen

In regard to the picture of the metal shoes shown on page 28 of the June 1972 TRUE WEST, I have seen several of these old shoes in different collections. My father had oxen when he homesteaded; and also my mother's father. There are several pictures in our family of my uncles with their oxen all harnessed and ready to go to the field.

One time Father was using two oxen and two broncos to plow with, and when he stopped for dinner he drove them to a nearby slough for water and he couldn't get the oxen stopped and they pulled the broncos into the water and would have drowned them if Dad hadn't gone into the water and cut the harness from them.

As to the lower picture on the same page, the pan that is shown was filled with water and used to cool the red hot tire which was placed around the felloe after the diameter was shortened by either cutting and rewelding or by reducing the diameter with a hot shrinker which shoved the metal together. Then being heated to a red heat and being placed on top of the felloe before being put into the pan.

I had lots of practice at this in the late twenties and early thirties. This made the tire tight on the felloe and set the spokes tighter in the hub—making the wheel almost as good as new. Later we took to cutting the spokes down and shrinking automobile rims on them so the rubber tires could be used which were much easier for the horses to pull.

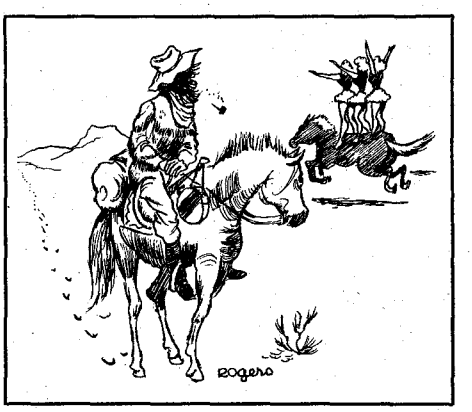
I enjoy your magazines.—Chester R. Keith, Rural Route, Granville, North Dakota 58741

Sheriff Everheart

I was surprised and glad when I read the article in May 1972 TRUE WEST about "The Stranger That Rode With The Posse." Sheriff Bill Everheart was my husband's cousin and I have heard him speak of his cousin Bill—but he was a much older man than my husband. My father remembered him when he was sheriff of Grayson County, Texas. Said he rode up to his father's home one time and had a man in charge that he had arrested for killing other people's cattle and skinning them and selling their hides. This man had picked three men that he wanted to go on his bond—a Major Porter, my grandfather (Wilson West), and a Mr. Wickson. They went to see Major Porter first and he knew that he was safe, so he said, "If West and Wickson will go your bond, I'll go."

They went to see my grandfather next and the thief said, "I want you to go on my bond for theft," and my grandfather said, "Who has been stealing?" and he said, "Me—I am the man."

Grandfather said, "I won't go on any bond of a man that will steal." So he sat there a while and asked the sheriff, "What do you say?" The sheriff said, "I think the old gentleman has said enough."



So Everheart took him on to Wickson who asked, "What did West say?" He replied that West said he would go on no man's bond who would steal, and Wickson said, "I say the same thing." So the sheriff took him on to jail.

I have heard my father speak many times about Preston Bend—there was a killing there and some of the Prestons were killed. And I think maybe a hanging. Maybe some of the old-timers will remember something about it. Some Everhearts still live in and around Sherman.—Mrs. Amy West, 356 Downing Blvd., San Leandro, California 94577

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 35)

a nurse in World War I; Edell Lewis Weaver, a one-time resident of Thayer; and a sister I believe was named Mindell. She is supposed to have married an Indian—possibly named Wilson, and moved West to California or Washington.

Also, can anyone tell me Daisey's father's correct first name, where he was born, birth date, date and place of death, etc. Also his parents. He died of consumption when Daisey was a small child (probably around 1891). He had a farm in Arkansas. Does anyone know where? He also had a brother in Arkansas who used to write to Grandma when my mother was a young girl. Mother doesn't remember his first name. He died when Grandma was young. Any information will be appreciated.—Mrs. Marie L. Morris, Box 284, Bay City, Texas 77414

Brickey-Beal-Garner-Matticks

Has anyone any information on Jerry Beal of Indiana, Henry Beal of Westmoreland County, Virginia or Brickey, Beal and Garner of Tennessee 1780-1800.

I would like to correspond with anyone regarding Posey Matticks, born November 14, 1771; married Mahala Melane from Virginia (when?) and lived in Indiana in 1844. Children were Mary who married Jerry Rush; Rebecca; Collings; Rhoda who married a Stout; Sara who married a Starks or Stout; Rachel who married first a Stephenson, June 10, 1810 in Virginia and second Neri Garner on April 26, 1842 in Missouri; Pleasant; Jesse; Reed. Posey lived in Illinois. Uncles in Kentucky in 1847 were Tommy; Billy and James in Virgina; and D. L. and Jesse McClain in Park County, Indiana in 1848.—Barbara Garner Benscoter, 3829-17th Street C, Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Rodgers

Am trying to locate "Bill" Rodgers (Rogers) who was from West Virginia. He was an oil field worker in El Dorado, Arkansas in 1920 and was a burn patient at the El Dorado hospital in 1922. He is about five feet eleven inches tall, well built, with ruddy complexion, brown hair and brown eyes. He would be in his early seventies. He was in South America in 1927.

I never knew his given name. Any information, whether he is living or dead, will be greatly appreciated.—Mrs. Minnie

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Bibby, Fountain Lodge Nursing Home, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

Hardy

I would like to hear from anyone who knew a boxer called Happy Jack Hardy in Missouri in 1914 or 1915. His real name was Clarence A. Paisley and he had just been discharged from the army near St. Louis, Missouri at this time. Happy Jack Hardy was said to have been a sparring partner for Jack Dempsey at this time. Could this have been when Jack Dempsey fought under the name of Kid Blackie? This man was my father and he never spoke of his boxing. He married my mother in Joplin, Missouri in 1916 and kept the name Jack Hardy until he died in 1937. Did he quit boxing when the Joplin Athletic Club was taken to court to try to stop boxing there? Would like to hear from someone who may have belonged to the club in Joplin at that time. Also, anyone who belonged to the old Missouri Athletic Club at St. Louis and knows how fighters were recruited in that area. I will answer all letters—Mrs. Harold E. Rayl, 810 East Meadowbrook, Space C-37, Phoenix, Arizona 85014

Ballard

From family legend, John Ballard was born about 1828 near Lancaster, Kentucky. He was in the Confederate Army as a guard at Andersonville Prison when his youngest brother, George Washington Ballard, a Union soldier, was sent there after being captured. Through a little conniving John helped George to escape and being under suspicion himself of assisting in the escape, John deserted. Supposedly John went to Texas and became a member of the Texas Rangers. He may also have owned a store at one time in Gunnison, Colorado but I don't know if the store in Gunnison was before or after the Civil War.

George Washington Ballard was born November 27, 1840 near Tippecanoe, Missouri and was in the Union Army during the Civil War. At the time of his capture by Confederate forces, he hid a ten dollar gold piece on his person. He was stripped by the Confederate guards in their search for weapons and various other sundries, but the gold piece escaped detection. While imprisoned in Andersonville, George supposedly ate raw dog meat (supplied by his brother John Ballard, a prison guard) to keep up his strength to escape. Once he had escaped (with the help of his brother, John) George used the gold piece to purchase shoes and supplies. This was done through the assistance of a Negro woman who purchased these items the day after he escaped.

George deserted the Union Army after successfully making his way back to the home of his oldest brother, David William Ballard in Lucas County, Iowa. Dave hid him out for several weeks and then George left Iowa. He went West, changed his name and became a gambler. Many years later one of his brothers recognized him in a saloon. He may have been married at that time. Nothing is known about his assumed name or possible family.

Information about what happened to either of these brothers is welcomed. They were both brothers to my grandmother, Minerva Ballard, who married Allen Jacobs in Iowa in 1854.—Zane E. Jacobs, 2075 Mariposa Street, Seaside, California 93955

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The author holds two degrees from The University of Texas and is a former instructor in history at Stephen F. Austin, Nacogdoches, Texas.

ROBERT L. WAGNER, P.O. Box 13488 Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711

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Powell

I would appreciate any information about James Allen Powell who married a Seminole Indian. They had three or four children, one named Osceola(?).—Elmer C. Powell, 514 Airport Rd., Punta Gorda, Florida 33950

Conard

Would like to find a Joseph John Conard. He was raised in Brooklyn, New York and had a sister named Lillian. I knew Joe when he was in the Navy in San Diego, California. He was on the *U. S. S. Toledo* in 1947 and '48 and was discharged in 1949 and came to San Diego to see me but I was in San Francisco at the time visiting friends. By the time I returned to San Diego, he had already left.

I was in an orphanage when I knew him and my name then was Frieda G. Weaver.—Beaver Campbell, 778 Pevtz Valley Road, Alpine, California 92001

Hollingsworth

I am trying to ascertain parent's names and birthplaces of Wililam Jesse Hollingsworth. He was born on Christmas Day in 1869 or 1870 (some of the family say in Arkansas, some Indiana). He ran away from home as a teen-ager, after his father's second marriage, and joined Mollie Bailey's circus, and the family never knew details of his early life. He married Mrs. Mary Elizabeth (Dunnavant) Shelton in Ellis County, Texas in 1895. We do not know how long he traveled with this early-day circus. Mollie Bailey, a Confederate spy and famous circus woman, was married to Gus Bailey, the author of the song "The Old Grey Mare." I would like to hear from anyone who knew my husband's Grandfather Hollingsworth, either during his circus days or later. He may have had a sister named Lillie Mae. He is buried at Silverton, Texas.—Mrs. Jay Womack, 3461 Manana Drive, Dallas, Texas 75220

Postlethwaite-Kenton-Singleton

I would like to hear from anyone familiar with the Postlethwaite family of Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Virginia and Iowa. I am also searching for the parents of Nancy Kenton of Virginia. Anyone working on the Singletons of Virginia and Kentucky?—Mrs. Raymond Yekel, Route 2, Parma, Idaho 83660

Ball

William Ball was born in Kentucky in 1805, later going into Indiana and Iowa with his father's family (James Ball). He outlived two wives and at the time of his death in Wilson County, Kansas in 1867 he left a wife named Paralee. His estate was the third one to be filed for

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probate in Wilson County. He and his family left Davis County, Iowa in 1865 or 1866. He filed on his claim and after his death Paralee Ball proved up on the land and secured the deed May 1, 1869, the farm being the NE 1/4 of Section 23, Township 28, So. R. 15 East—recorded in Book (H) page 91. The Verdigris River divides this land. The little town of Gilford was partially on one corner of this farm. It is north and east of Fredonia, the county seat. William operated the mill, blacksmith shop and farmed. There was a newspaper, a good school and other small businesses but now all is gone and Gilford is but a memory.

I am attempting to locate the grave of William Ball. About one or one and a half miles southeast of Gilford in the bend of the Verdigris River, under tall weeds and vines is an old cemetery. There are very few old-timers living in this area who know of these graves. It is possible the grave of William Ball and the graves of others of his family are located there. His children were Emeline, twelve; Nancy Ann, nine; John Franklin, eight; Ira, five; Lucinda Jane, infant. Those of school age attended school at Gilford.—Roy H. Ball, 4804 N.W. 73rd Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73132

Koonce-Ivy

On October 25, 1865 my grandfather, John Wheeler Koonce, a captain in the U.S. Army, married Josephine Ivy at Port Lavaca, Texas. She was supposedly of Spanish extraction yet her maiden name indicates otherwise. The only place where her maiden name is found is in the family Bible, placed there by my grandfather. Any information about her would be greatly appreciated.—Josephine West, Centerville, Washington 98613

Bridges

I am looking for information on Jasper N. Bridges, born about 1837 in Illinois, and his first wife, Mary F. Coulter, also born in Illinois. By 1880, he was in Nevada, Missouri with his second wife, Margarette, and from 1906 to 1915 he lived in Seattle, Washington. He may also have lived for a time in Ogden, Utah.—Larry C. McAlister, 1623 East 89th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64131

Oliver

I am trying to find someone who might know of the granddaughters of Dew Roger Oliver, Jr. He was in the 1880 census of Bastrop County, Texas. Dew and his wife (I don't know her maiden name) had one son, Emmett. He later went to Old Mexico and was killed in a mining accident, leaving two daughters. His mother was Euffa Martin. His mother and father separated and she went to Hawaii in the late '20s and never returned. His father lived in Newhall, California and died in Englewood in a hospital August 27, 1949. He is buried there. His second wife, Olena, was a nurse and I believe she moved back to San Francisco, California.—Mabel C. Finch, 321 Aven Avenue, Box 35, Caldwell, Idaho 83605

Parnell-Kohl-Jordan

I'd like information on the Parnell family. Originally from Ireland, they moved to Montana, then Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio.

Barney Parnell was my grandfather. His brother, Benjamin, started the House of David in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Barney's wife is Katherine Mona Parnell.

Information about my wife's grandfather, Val Kohl, would be appreciated. He would be in his seventies. He moved back east from California, but we do not know where.

I'd also like information on the Jordan family from Major Ellis Jordan on back, from Kansas to Indiana or anywhere.—Clarence L. Jordan, East 2223 Weile Avenue, Spokane, Washington 99207

Spradley (Stradley)-Thompson-Hayes

Could any of your readers tell me if they ever knew or heard of a Tom or Will Spradley (Stradley) who ran a boarding house in Russett, Indian Territory around the turn of the century. I believe the boarding house was for loggers and then railroad men as they came into the Territory, building the railroads.

The boarding house was run by him and his wife and brother-in-law's niece. (My mother mentioned both a Tom and Will. I'm not sure of his wife's first name.)

Also, any help on a Mack and Josey Thompson who are buried somewhere in that area—possibly the old Woodville area. Mack later married Mae Settles. Mack was a preacher in the area not far from the Cookson Hills.

I'm also interested in the two Sam Hayes from around Ardmore, Oklahoma. Red Sam Hayes and Black Sam Hayes (?), Mother's cousins.—Mrs. Charles M. Waldie, 1118 Glen Lock, Irving, Texas 75062

McWilliams

I would like any information on Jessie Louis McWilliams, born November 11, 1891 in Dundee, Illinois. His father was Scott McWilliams, born in Illinois in 1866 or 1867. His mother was Jennie or Junie Graig, born in Illinois in 1866 or 1867.

Jessie married Aileen Amanda Lawrence on June 4, 1920. One daughter, Betty Lorraine, was born August 24, 1922 in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Jessie and Aileen were divorced in 1928. At that time he was a trouble shooter on an oil well.—Mrs. Bonnie Baker, 18042 Comstock, Sonoma, California 95426

Uhlry-Sibbald

I would like to contact anyone who knew these people: Rebecca Uhlry who died January 12, 1936 at Cushing, Oklahoma. She was my great-grandmother. At the time of her death she resided at 202 W. Katy Street in Cushing. Prior to that she lived in Guymon, Oklahoma.

Would also like information on her daughter, Estelle (Till) Uhlry Skinner who married a David G. Sibbald on May 5, 1915 at Cushing. Their witnesses were ——— L. Briggs and Ethel Briggs of Cushing.

If Estelle were still living she would be ninety-four. Rebecca lived to be ninety-five.—Mrs. Tilly Jones, 605-29th S.E., Auburn, Washington 98002

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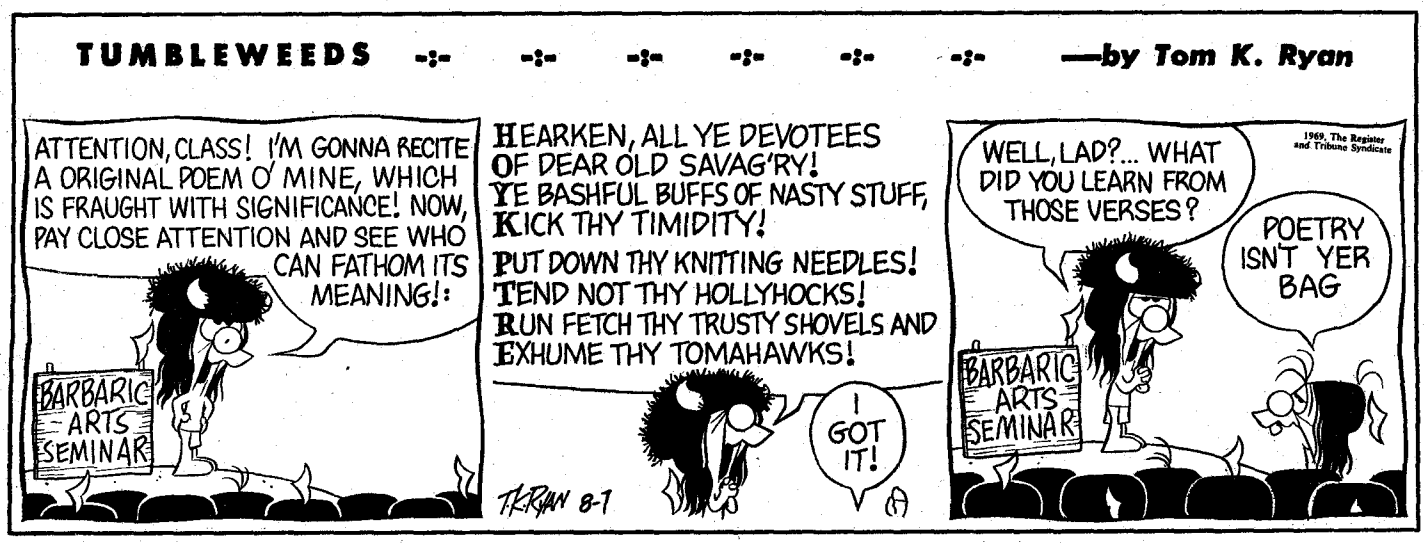

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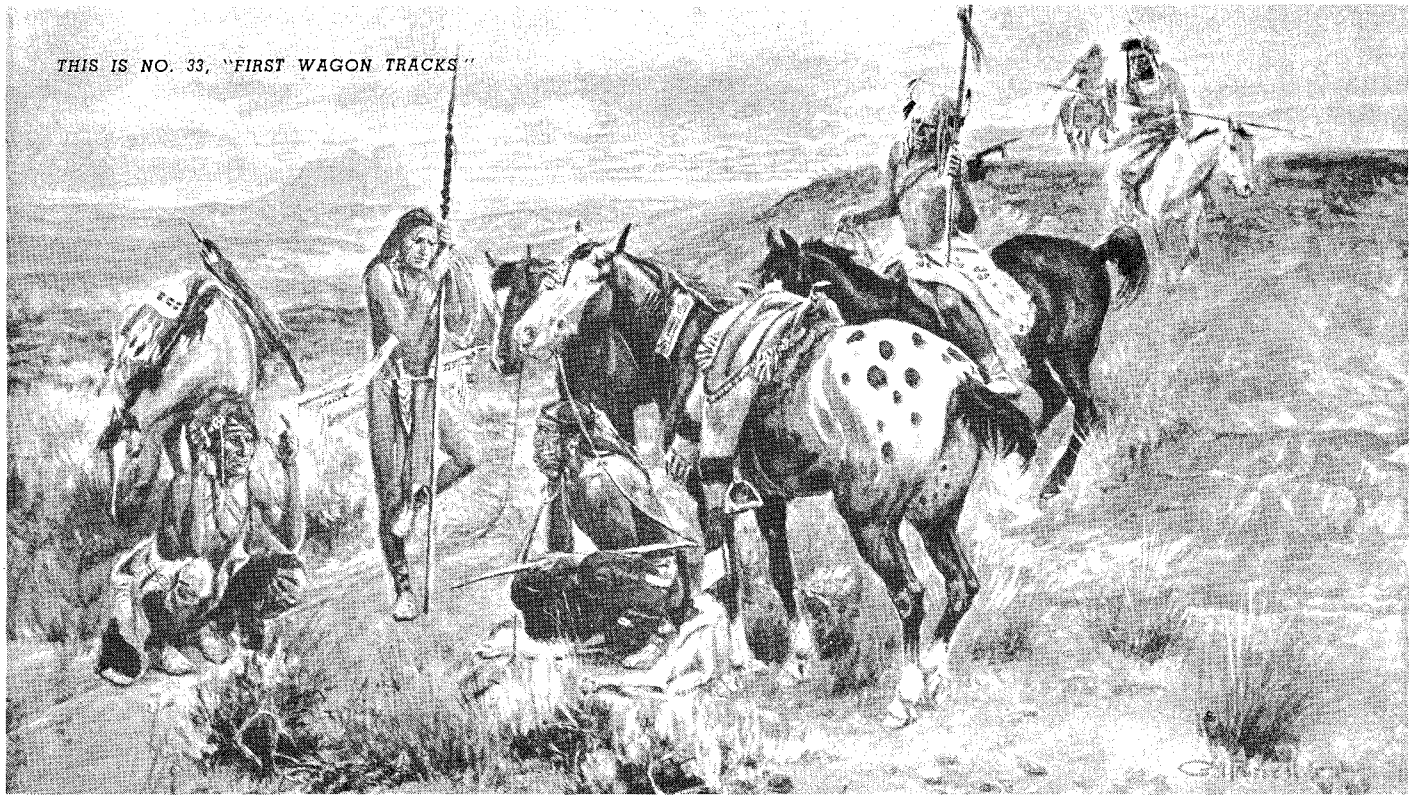

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61—Smoking Them Out, 10½x11
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68—Smoke of a 45, 9x12
69—Sage Brush Sport, 10x14
70—Signal Fire, 10x14
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72—In Enemy Country, 10x14
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77—The Attack, 10x14
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83—When the Nose of a Horse Beats the Eyes of Man, 10x14
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86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 9x13
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89—When Mules Wore Diamonds, 10x14
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